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Tuesday July 28 1998

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Andorra FF 10	Hong Kong HK\$ 25	Romania LE 10
Australia A\$ 20	India Rupee Rs 20	Saudi Arabia SR 20
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INTERNATIONAL

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Cover story

The Net: can you believe it?

G2 with European weather

Health

Personal trainers: do you need one?

G2 pages 10-11

Education

Camping it up

G2 pages 12-13

Mandelson given trade and industry role as PM tames Brown camp

Blair balances the power

Michael White
Political Editor

TONY Blair's long-awaited ministerial reshuffle yesterday made him undisputed master of his cabinet when he sacked four falling colleagues, promoted Blairite new blood and forced Gordon Brown and Peter Mandelson to bury their barely-concealed rivalry at the top.

At the end of Mr Blair's first drama-packed cabinet reshuffle, neither traditionalists nor modernisers could claim to have won most of the spoils in the Prime Minister's carefully rebalanced team — though the removal of the Chancellor's ally, Nick Brown, as chief whip was widely seen as a blow to the so-called Gordon Brownites. Other ministerial allies will be purged today.

But Nick Brown was tactfully rewarded with a full cabinet post, as Agriculture Minister, following Jack Cunningham's promotion to be "enforcer" in the Cabinet Office. That move best underlined Downing Street's determination not to be made a prisoner of faction, real or perceived. A mixture of Old and New Labour meritocrats — "ability is the key" aides insisted — duly shared the plum appointments.

As Mr Blair moved on to junior appointments, the Downing Street spokesman went to great lengths to stress that he was strengthening the centre. By that he means the core of government, defined as No 10, the Cabinet Office and the Treasury, rather than trying to curb the Chancellor's empire.

Few MPs entirely believed that graceful interpretation. Downing Street stressed a new formality to the way the 14-month-old regime does its business and dismissed talk of ideological feuds as "personality spats, a lot of it fuelled by people who believed they were serving their ministers when they were not". That is more credible. Nonetheless the Tories dubbed the changes "a charter for failure".

With Harriet Harman, David Clark and Gavio Strang all leaving the Cabinet — unexpectedly joined by Lord Richard, Leader of the Lords — the day's unscheduled drama was provided by Frank Field, doyen of right-wing welfare reformers.

Refused Ms Harman's job as Social Security Secretary and asked to leave the Department of Social Security — where his failure to provide effective reform options has disappointed Mr Blair — Mr Field turned down two alternative offers, as "traud czar" or a cross-departmental drugs minister. Instead Mr Field returned to the back benches.



Minister with portfolio: Peter Mandelson, erstwhile spin doctor, becomes the man to run the Department of Trade and Industry. PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER

leaving Tory and Lib Dem MPs to protest that welfare reform is in tatters.

As for Mr Mandelson, the most turbulent architect of Labour modernisation, he was given the "real job" he has long urged — running the weighty Department of Trade and Industry. Instead of image-moulding behind the scenes, he modestly announced he would not use the Heseltine-ravaged title of President of the Board of Trade. "There's a strong message in all this far Peter. It is 'go out and show you can do it', one well-placed official explained.

With the economy faltering and unions suspicious of his instincts, Mr Mandelson has a formidable task to add to his continuing "Dome Secretary" functions.

As reported in yesterday's Guardian, Stephen Byers, the Blairite moderniser, becomes the first Class of '92 MP to enter the Cabinet as Mr Brown's deputy, Chief Secretary to the Treasury. The incumbent, Alastair Darling, goes to the DSS.

Gordon Brown has lost out quite badly — watching as key allies have been removed and unfriendly newcomers moved in. But the Government itself could also suffer. Its election-winning commitment to "reform welfare as we know it" has suffered a substantial blow.

— Leader Comment, page 9

team, Baroness Margaret Jay — daughter of Lord Callaghan — gets Lord Richard's job, the fourth new cabinet face.

ahead of the tricky fight over abolition of hereditary voting rights. "I am sorry not to have the opportunity to sea Lords

Ministerial moves

- UP — Jack Cunningham — Agriculture to Cabinet Office
- Peter Mandelson — Extra Cabinet as Trade Secretary
- Stephen Byers — Extra Cabinet as Chief Secretary to Treasury
- Baroness Jay — Extra Cabinet as Leader of the Lords
- Alastair Darling — From Chief Secretary to Social Security
- John Field — Defence Minister to Transport outside Cabinet
- DOWN — Harriet Harman — Sacked as Social Security Secretary
- Frank Field — Resigned as Welfare Reform Minister
- David Clark — Sacked as Cabinet Office Minister
- Gavio Strang — Sacked as Transport Minister
- Lord Richard — Sacked as Leader of the Lords
- SEPARATE — Ann Taylor — Leader of the House to Chief Whip
- Margaret Beckett — Trade Secretary to Leader of the House
- Nick Brown — Chief Whip to Agriculture

Dr John Reid, a well-regarded Army Minister, was shifted to Dr Strang's old post, the politically-sensitive job of Transport Minister under John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister.

Mr Blair made his dispositions at Chequers on Sunday along with his most trusted and objective intimates: Jonathan Powell, chief of staff; Sir Richard Wilson, Cabinet Secretary; Sally Morgan, his political secretary; and Anji Hunter, his Downing Street planner and oldest political friend. None is elected.

Last night Mr Blair was calling in ministers, safely out of the glare of the TV lights, to sack or promote. Nigel Griffiths, the consumer affairs minister, Tom Clarke and Mark Fisher from the Ministry of Culture, and turn to page 2, column 3

Harman and Field are cast aside

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

WELFARE reform will remain at the heart of the Government's agenda, Downing Street insisted yesterday after removal of the ministers who were supposed to modernise the £100 billion social security system.

The departure from government of not only Harriet Harman, whose demise had been widely predicted, but also Frank Field, leaves a vacuum where Labour had promised a hive of activity and creative thinking.

Mr Field's welfare reform green paper, on which consultation closes on Friday, could now be sidetracked. But Alastair Darling, the new Social Security Secretary, has been told he must regain the momentum of reform.

The Prime Minister's official spokesman said: "The next six months are going to be key to welfare reform. We want a lot of action."

The green paper has been criticised for being short on specifics. Tony Blair is known to have been disappointed by the result of Mr Field's deliberations, having taken a calculated gamble in appointing him to "think the unthinkable", despite the suspicion with which he is viewed by many party members.

Although Mr Field's supporters blame others, not least Ms Harman and the Treasury, for limiting his room for manoeuvre, Downing Street apparently feels that Britain's first minister for welfare reform failed to live up to his billing.

The spokesman said: "I think the Prime Minister felt that the welfare reform drive needed a fresh sense of impetus."

Decisions on reform would be needed by the end of the autumn in key areas, the spokesman said. These included pensions, disability and industrial injuries benefits, widows' benefits and contribution conditions for national insurance.

Mr Field, who marched out of No 10 to tell reporters he had resigned from government rather than accept other jobs offered him, said: "I believe I can support the Prime Minister more effectively from the backbenches."

This implicit warning will delight the Conservatives, who were last night claiming that the welfare reform crusade was finished. Iain Duncan Smith, shadow social security secretary, said: "The departure of Frank Field confirms that serious reform of the welfare system is off the agenda."

David Rendel, Liberal Democrat social security spokesman, said the removal of both Mr Field and Ms Harman was a "savage indictment" of the Government's failure to deliver on reform.

The Government has already this month suffered from attacks on its planned increases in benefits spending, which is projected to rise to almost £100 billion by 2001. There is evident irritation in Downing Street that social security ministers stoked expectations of a cut in spending that they could not then deliver.

There is also annoyance at the often open feuding between the Field and Harman camps, which continued even after Mr Blair made plain it had to stop.

With a view to an early return, Ms Harman's supporters were talking up her achievements in areas such as the national child care strategy.



"I was 31 and going nowhere - then Ruskin College changed my life"

Pauline Ortiz

Pauline Ortiz is a senior officer for BIFU, the banking union, and a graduate - life was not always so good. She left school at 17 and by 31 she was divorced with two children and no job. Then she heard about Ruskin.

Founded in 1899 Ruskin was the first residential college for working people and for those who had little or no educational opportunity when young.

Every autumn since then, men and women have arrived at the college from a variety of communities and backgrounds, ethnic, industrial, and trade union, to study full-time for the first time in their adult lives.

They will leave with formal qualifications and go on to further study, or return home to pursue their careers. Few have any recognised educational qualifications when they arrive.

All have a common interest in society and a desire to improve it. Entry to Ruskin is by interview and is only for students who are 20 and over.

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Your combative starter for the week - Jeremy Paxman



Jeremy Paxman: four-year contract

Janine Gibson
Media Correspondent

SOME of the nation's most esteemed intellectuals now face the prospect of being interrupted by the BBC's most formidable interviewer with the confirmation yesterday that Jeremy Paxman is to present Radio 4's Start The Week.

As part of a new four-year contract, believed to be worth around £1.2 million, Paxman will add the Monday morning discussion programme to his diverse BBC portfolio of Newsnight and University

Challenge. The BBC has been searching for a replacement presenter for Start The Week since Melvyn Bragg was elevated to the House of Lords and forced to step down.

A BBC insider said yesterday that the corporation was determined to keep Paxman through extensive contract negotiations after some widely-reported approaches from ITV.

At least two ITV companies had attempted to lure Paxman to lead his particular blend of hard-hitting credibility to the channel's planned £10 million current affairs series.

The 80 Minutes-style series

is a high-profile gamble for ITV's director of programmes, David Liddiment, who recently announced he wished to attract more middle class viewers to the channel.

ITV may have missed its chance to poach Paxman through indecision. Four companies are still battling to be awarded the contract, although an announcement has been expected since early June.

Paxman issued a statement yesterday confirming he had considered leaving the BBC. "I am thrilled to continue with Newsnight. Of course, I

thought about moving elsewhere, but there is nowhere else on television which presents the same opportunity, day in day out, to get to grips with current events," he said.

Of his new job, he added: "I can only say that Melvyn Bragg has turned the programme into an unmissable Monday morning Bloody Mary. I hope I can fill his shoes."

The 48-year-old presenter, who earlier this year won an industry award for asking Michael Howard the same question 14 times, will continue to present Newsnight

from Tuesday to Thursday and takes up his new radio role from September.

He has worked for the BBC for over 20 years on Panorama, Breakfast News and local news as well as Newsnight.

Speculation that he might leave the corporation has centred on competition with David Dimbleby to be the BBC's "face of current affairs".

He lost out to Dimbleby on Question Time and as anchor for the general election broadcast, but as the younger man, he must feel certain that his time will come.

Inside

News

World News

Analysis

Finance

Comment 8; Leader 9; Crossword 16

Quick Crossword 15

Radio and Television 16



770261 307323

2

7

11

12

Sketch

How the peacock got the cream



Gary Young

AFTER a night of long knives and a day of short straws, it is reassuring to see that some things are sacred.

Harriet Harman's desk may be cleared and the Aungmye Stables of the Foreign Office cleaned. Ann Taylor may surf to her new seat on a wave of self-satisfaction and a newly-resigned Frank Field may stand and scowl from the back.

But Peter Mandelson and his unfessibly large dome remain inseparable. He had woken up yesterday morning as the Minister without Portfolio and by the afternoon, was addressing the House as the Secretary for Trade and Industry.

But when it came to questions about the damaging levels of HFCs in the Millennium Dome there was only one man in the Labour ranks who could answer them. Cunningham may have the new-age title of the Enforcer. But Mandelson is the Minister for the Millennium.

Before his arrival there had been considerable bonhomie in the House. Sports Minister Tony Banks had invited the Opposition to a disabled football match in Leicester at the end of the week.

"Sport is important to the development of the individual," said Banks, and a room full of chauffeur-driven puncheons had harrumphed their approval.

Chris Smith had been congratulated by his Tory counterpart, Peter Ainsworth, on keeping his job (a job, incidentally that Mandelson was after): "Nobody's more happy than I," said a mischievous Ainsworth before going on to call his opposite number a "control freak".

But Mandelson started as he will almost inevitably go on — even if he doesn't mean to. Not with cheers of goodwill from colleagues on both sides of the

House but a sniper attack from his own back benches. Referring to his comrade and colleague as "the minister who cast such a long shadow" Gordon Prentice (Labour, Fendle) asked Mandelson to reveal the contents of his meetings with clients of the lobbying firm, GPC Markets Access. And why, asked Prentice, had Mandelson not invited him to dine with lobbyists?

"Because you're an oik who couldn't afford the hors d'oeuvres," would undoubtedly have been Mandelson's favoured response.

But Mandey kept his cool and honed his disdain. The man who described his friend and colleague, Derek Draper, as "boastful and brash" would not bear a word said against his beloved dome. I have neither "procured nor negotiated personally" with lobbyists in connection with the dome, he

replied. To some it is an eyesore-on-the-Thames; to others a ludicrous and expensive liability. But to Mandelson this is a building that will "excite and inspire the nation" and when it comes to commissions for it he will take anything he can get.

This is the Dome, he boasted, that his friend the Prime Minister had once hailed as "too good to pull down". Everybody else in the House, it seemed, apart from him, realised that this was not necessarily a full-hearted endorsement. They laughed. Mandelson forged on, his lips pulled so taut it looked as though his face would crack.

But it took the diminutive figure of John Bercow (Conservative, Buckingham) — a huge ego in a very small suit — to finally flap the stoic Mandelson. "How much money is coming from the manufacturing industry, the decline of which [Mandelson] has just taken responsibility for," asked Mr Bercow who may or may not have been standing up.

This was a defining moment. The first question for his brand new brief. What a time for Mandelson to get his thumbs in a twist. Bercow's question, he said, showed: "Pure brass neck and nerve that takes a very large biscuit."

Then he strutted out, like the unruffled peacock who got the cream.

Straw grants limited amnesty to more than 30,000 in one-off attempt to cut backlog of 76,000 cases

Asylum seekers free to stay

Alan Travis
Home Affairs Editor

MORE than 30,000 asylum seekers and their families are to be allowed to stay in Britain under a limited amnesty unveiled by the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, yesterday in a one-off effort to cut the backlog of 76,000 cases.

But this exemption is to be accompanied by a plan to disperse the remaining asylum seekers to approved hostels and bed and breakfast accommodation throughout Britain while their cases are heard.

Applicants, who are banned from working, will not receive welfare benefits while their cases are decided. In-

stead they will mostly get help "in kind" such as food vouchers. Cash payments will be kept to a minimum. "What the genuine asylum seeker needs is food and shelter, not a Giro cheque," Mr Straw said yesterday.

The scheme, first floated by the Conservative Westminster council, is designed to relieve the burden on London local authorities. Extra Home Office officials are to be drafted to Manchester, Glasgow, Leeds and Bristol to oversee the dispersal.

In a system similar to that used in Germany, hostel accommodation will be provided directly by a Home Office agency and asylum seekers will have no choice about where they are sent. Private landlords, housing associa-

tions and voluntary organisations will be invited to provide the accommodation. Local authorities will no longer have to bear the burden.

The decision not to restore welfare benefits for asylum seekers waiting to hear the outcome of their cases comes despite fierce Labour protests that such action was inhumane when Peter Lilley axed the payments four years ago.

Mr Straw said he hoped to clear the backlog and produce initial decisions on asylum cases within two months by April 2001. A further £120 million is to be made available to clean up the system, officially described as a shambling.

Ministers yesterday insisted that they were not declaring an amnesty for the 30,000 who have been waiting

longer than 18 months for an initial decision on their cases. For some 10,000 cases who have been waiting more than five years for an initial decision, the delay alone will be regarded as sufficient to give them indefinite leave to remain in Britain. Many of them have been waiting since before 1993 because their applications were put to one side as part of a previous government attempt to clear the backlog.

At least 20,000 more who first applied between July 1993 and December 1995 will be allowed to stay for at least a further four years if they have family ties or have "given service to the community".

Other proposals in the White Paper on Asylum and Immigration include:

□ Asking overseas visitors who need visas for close family events to post a financial bond, returnable when they leave the country.

□ Introducing statutory regulation to curb unscrupulous immigration advisers and a legal code of practice on checks to prevent illegal working.

□ Abolishing the "White List" of countries, such as Pakistan and Romania, from where it is presumed all asylum applications are bogus.

□ Extending sweeping police powers to immigration officers, including greater use of fingerprinting.

□ Giving asylum seekers held in detention centres the automatic right to a bail hearing before a judge within

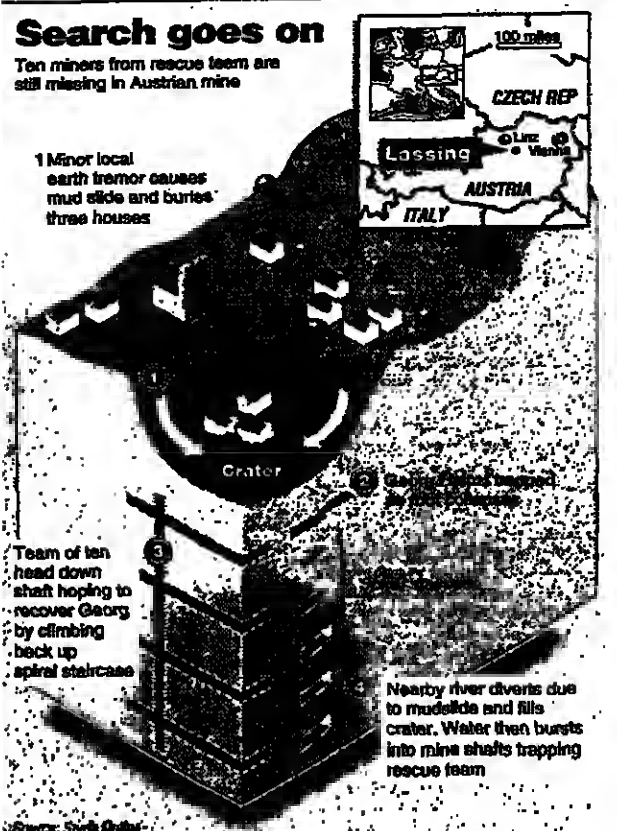
seven days. Written reasons for detention to be issued. Further expansion in detention places and new punitive powers for detention centre officers similar to those used in private prisons.

□ Giving asylum seekers five days instead of 25 days to make representations after their first interview.

Refugee groups gave a mixed welcome to the White Paper. The Refugee Council said the new support arrangements risked being "costly, cumbersome and chaotic" and it would have been better to allow asylum seekers to work. Amnesty International said it was concerned that measures to expand airline liaison officers would bar many genuine asylum seekers from reaching Britain.



Georg Hainzl, aged 24, had only one complaint when he was rescued at the Lassing mine in Austria — his feet were cold



Search goes on: Ten miners from rescue team are still missing in Austrian mine

Miner saved after 10 days trapped underground

Rescue brings glimmer of hope to Alpine village hit by tragedy

Kate Connolly in Prague

A YOUNG Austrian miner trapped underground in a collapsing shaft was savouring freedom yesterday, after confounding rescuers who had been convinced that he was no longer alive.

Georg Hainzl, aged 24, was buried 400m underground after a mudslide engulfed a talcum mine in Lassing, southern Austria. Rescue teams were

hours away from abandoning their search and filling in the disintegrating shaft with concrete when they found him in an underground rest area.

His only complaint on being winched to safety was that his feet were cold.

The rescue brought a glimmer of hope that nine miners and a geologist, who were caught in a rockfall while trying to reach Mr Hainzl last weekend, might also be alive.

The nightmare in the small Alpine village, 125 miles

south-east of Vienna, began at lunchtime on Friday July 17, when a sudden shift in the rocks surrounding the mine caused the roof to collapse.

A 300ft-diameter crater opened up, leaving Mr Hainzl trapped in the underground rest area. Telephone contact was made, and just before a second landslide cut the connection, he told his father Johann: "Papa... just when I'm going to become a father, I have to die."

That evening 10 rescuers entered the lift shaft to stabilise the workings. In an attempt to reach their colleague, But they also became trapped, 500ft underground,

and are feared drowned after a river flooded the crater with enough water to fill 40 swimming pools. The subsidence dragged down houses and part of a road, forcing 200 people to evacuate homes.

A giant water pump was used in an effort to control the water level in the mine. But rescuers were repeatedly forced to pull back when a vacuum created by the falling water table pulled at tonnes of mud and debris that filled a maze of shafts and tunnels in the mine. Another collapse was feared.

On Saturday, rescuers and Lassing inhabitants appeared resigned that the men were

dead. Any air pockets would have filled with mud and water, experts believed. On Sunday, some rescue teams started to leave.

But mining colleagues who had reported for days hearing the sound of knocking, but whose suspicions were dismissed as "wishful thinking", fed a micro-camera down towards the rest place. Mr Hainzl, who was sitting on a table in a corner of the dark room, looked into the camera's lens, and hearing the words, "Is anyone there?", replied "It's me, Georg".

He was hauled up by rope through a 2ft-wide shaft and placed almost immediately

in a decompression chamber. Doctors say he is in excellent health, apart from dehydration.

A local boy brought the news of "the Lassing Miracle" to Mr Hainzl's family, including his pregnant girlfriend, on Sunday night. "I could not believe it," said his father, aged 48. "God has returned our son to us, but we can't celebrate too much as there are still missing men down there."

The search for the remaining men — the fathers of his children — has resumed with renewed hope, although there is little chance of finding them alive.

Review

Comic descent into psychosis

Mic Moroney

The Dead School
Town Hall Theatre, Galway

BEFORE Neil Jordan ever made a movie of Pat McCabe's novel, *The Butcher Boy*, McCabe and director Joe Byrne had taken to the stage with their own adaptation, the masterful two-hander of Frank Pig Says Hello.

Now, *The Dead School*, adapted by McCabe from his last novel but one, sees the pair together again with another manic piece of comic grotesque, set in a heightened Irish border town in the 1970s. The central character is Raphael Bell, an inflexible neurotic who has risen to the status of headmaster of St Anthony's junior school.

Drenched in the history of the Irish Free State — he saw his father shot dead by the Black and Tans, and as a young man, trembled with fervour at the mass Eucharistic Congress of 1932 — his mission is to inculcate this faith-and-fatherland ethos into the unruly urchins in his care.

Every spring, for 30-odd years, he has striven to deliver this riddle to the finals of the school's choir competition. However, his life's work is undone with the appointment of a young teacher, Ma-lachy Dudgeon, an incorrigible, unrepentant rake whose lack of discipline leads, directly or indirectly, to the drowning of a pupil. This, and the widowhood of Raphael Bell, triggers the schoolmaster's descent into ghoul-ridden psychosis — teaching the ghosts of dead children in his

boarded-up house on the outskirts of town.

O'Byrne delves wildly into this macabre material, directing his cast at a furious pace, as apart from Mick Lally as Raphael, they double up as creepy clerics, sly old beggars, snotty-nosed youngsters etc, trashing the stage in an 80-minute explosion of theatrical ideas.

The expressionistic antics are just about contained within the plunging perspectives of Tim Conroy's trick-laden troupe of hell set, which constantly reveals its surprises — hidden doors and drawers, and a succession of monstrous little puppets.

The screeching height of the caricatures, and the self-conscious theatricality of the playing, unfortunately tramples over many of the darker, sadder veins in McCabe's script, which, frankly, tries to pack in rather too much of the novel, often leading to down-right incoherence.

However, the packed Galway houses ecstatically identify with McCabe's iconoclastic collisions of trashy popular culture and monolithic rural Catholicism — from the unbridled comic routine about the liberated busybody boasting of her three abortions, to the ingrained peasant argot of morbid, prostrated faith (best exemplified by Raphael's unforgettable proposal to his wife: "How would you like to be buried with my people?")

As a result, this one-off production between the Galway Arts Festival and the local Macneus company, went down a treat. However, it will need a little bit more ironing out before they take it on the road.

Clinton battles to save face in showdown with Starr

Mark Tran in New York

PRESIDENT Bill Clinton's lawyers were negotiating with the special prosecutor, Kenneth Starr, yesterday over his demand that Mr Clinton appear before a grand jury to answer questions in the Monica Lewinsky investigation.

In a crucial week for the president, his lawyer, David Kendall, and Mr Starr were trying to work out a compromise that would avoid him marching up the steps of the federal courthouse. Mr Starr's subpoena marks the first time a president has been requested to appear before a grand jury.

All sorts of ideas were being floated to preserve Mr Clinton's dignity. In one scenario, the 23 grand jurors would be taken by bus to the White House to hear his testimony in person. The White House's opening gambit is to have Mr Clinton answer ques-

tions in writing, something Mr Starr is unlikely to accept.

Mr Starr and Mr Kendall have to decide whether Mr Clinton appears alone or with his lawyers, something that does not normally happen in grand jury testimony. The White House also wants to limit the scope of questions.

Should Mr Clinton be dissatisfied with the ground rules for his testimony, he could decide not to comply with the subpoena, precipitating a constitutional crisis.

The issue would probably have to go all the way to the supreme court, dragging the case out for a few more months. Legal experts say that is a risk worth taking.

Mr Clinton coasting in the public opinion polls while Mr Starr is unpopular.

No matter what course he takes, Mr Clinton faces danger. During the Paula Jones sexual harassment case he was questioned under oath on his relationship with Ms

Lewinsky, a former White House intern. If Mr Clinton changes his account of what occurred between him and Ms Lewinsky, Mr Starr can accuse him of having lied previously.

Should Mr Clinton stone-wall and challenge the subpoena in the courts, he faces the threat of impeachment proceedings by Congress, and erosion of public support.

Republican Senator Orrin Hatch, the chairman of the Senate judiciary committee, has already warned that a refusal by Mr Clinton to cooperate with Mr Starr would lead to such a move.

Congressional Democrats are also putting pressure on Mr Clinton to testify, amid fear of a public backlash that would hurt the party's chances in the November elections.

The White House argues that Mr Clinton has denied the main accusations against him — that he lied about an affair with Ms Lewinsky and tried to cover it up.

Princess's car had 'erratic brakes'

Jon Hanley in Paris

A CHAUFFEUR who regularly drove the car in which Diana, Princess of Wales, died, has said that it had persistent braking problems. Sources close to the French investigation into the crash said yesterday.

Olivier Lafaye, a former chauffeur for the Etoile Limousine company that owned the Mercedes 260S, told investigating magistrate Hervé Stéphan in an interview last month that one of the proprietors of the firm, which worked exclusively for the Paris Ritz hotel, had warned him the vehicle could be dangerous.

Mr Lafaye, the car's normal driver, also said it should not have been driven by anyone not familiar with it. Mr Lafaye gave the interview at his own request, the sources said, and in a 17-page typewritten statement he said he had been told by his then employer, François Musa, when first taking the wheel: "Be very careful with this car. Don't

brake suddenly or the back end will swing out."

Diana, her companion, Dodi Fayed and their driver, the Ritz Hotel deputy security chief Henri Paul, all died when the car, which bore the registration plate 686 LTV 75, crashed at high speed into a pillar in the Pont de l'Alma underpass on August 31 last year.

The sources said Mr Lafaye had told the judge that the car's anti-lock braking system and the brake warning light on the dashboard had been functioning "erratically" before the accident. The chauffeur commented: "That 686, it didn't hold the road well. You had to know it well to drive it safely, and Henri Paul had never driven it before."

Allegations that the car had at one time been involved in a bad accident and may have been malfunctioning, were made shortly after the crash. Etoile Limousine said at the time that the Mercedes had a full service record and was in excellent condition. Mr Lafaye was fired from Etoile Limousine in April following

an accident which he claimed was due to faulty maintenance on one of the company's cars. He said in his statement that when he complained about the Mercedes's constantly flickering brake light months before the fatal accident, he was told by Mr Musa and his partner, Mr Stéphan, that a Mercedes dealership had said it was a minor problem.

Neither Mr Musa or Mr Stéphan, both of whom have been interviewed by police, would comment on the allegations yesterday. The two men are expected to appear before Judge Stéphan within the next few weeks.

The wrecked car is still undergoing minute examination in a closely-guarded police compound in the Paris suburbs. The 11-month long investigation, which is now not expected to end before October, is still thought likely to conclude that the excessive speed of the Mercedes and the fact that Paul was more than three times over the legal drink-driving limit were the main factors in the crash.

Straw to examine stop and search of ethnic minorities

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

THE Home Secretary said yesterday that he would examine the disparity between the numbers of black and white people stopped and searched by police.

Jack Straw's pledge followed publication in the Guardian of figures showing that black

people are nearly eight times more likely to be stopped than white people.

He said his newly formed Race Relations Forum would examine the issue of stop and searches and arrests of members of ethnic minorities.

The statistics, published today by Statewatch, show a disparity between stops and arrests of black people and their white and Asian counterparts.

Blair tames Brown camp by balancing cabinet power

continued from page 1
George Mudie, deputy chief were sacked, though Mr Mudie — due to be replaced by Keith Bradley — will get another job.

Estelle Morris, junior education and teacher, will be promoted to Mr Byers' post of schools standards minister. John Denham, former Trotskyist, now arch-moderniser, will move into Mr Field's job. Helen Liddell, Economic Secretary, will move into Donald Dewar's slipstream at the Scottish Office, likely to suc-

ceed him when he goes to the Scottish Parliament next year.

Good news is expected for Home Office ministers Joyce Quin and Lord Williams of Mostyn. Both can expect promotion.

The Lord Chancellor's junior, Geoff Hoon, can also expect promotion. Among the class of '97 two veterans of Labour's long march back to power, Neil Kinnock's aides, Trisha Hewitt and Charles Clarke, will also become ministers.



Strip away the hype and the Internet is in danger of imploding on its own conceit, with or without the 2000 bug. The cybernetic parish pump is ceaselessly pumping drivell into an ocean of sludge, much of it made in America. The web of lies by Jonathan Miller

G2 cover story

The unearthing in Istanbul of a magnificent 1,600-year-old palace may unravel many mysteries of a vast empire which became a byword for intrigue and treachery.

Chris Morris reports on the excavation at the site of a former prison



The director of Istanbul's archaeology museum shows one of the frescoed masterpieces

PHOTOGRAPH BY STATION WINTER

Turks find hub of Byzantine rule

TURKISH archaeologists in Istanbul believe they have discovered a long-lost part of history — the Grand Palace of the Byzantine Empire which ruled much of the known world for more than a thousand years.

The significance of the dig — which is within sight of the famous Aya Sofya, in the city's historic Sultanahmet district — was revealed after months of secret excavation and restoration.

"We began excavations in late 1997 and finished this phase in the middle of last month," said Alpay Pasinli, the director of Istanbul's Museum of Archaeology. "We have a lot more work to do."

Local residents had thought the small construction site, which is visible at street level, was being used to repair a canal system.

"It is a great discovery," said Ekrem Akurgal, a professor of archaeology. "It gives us another unique site in the heart of the city."

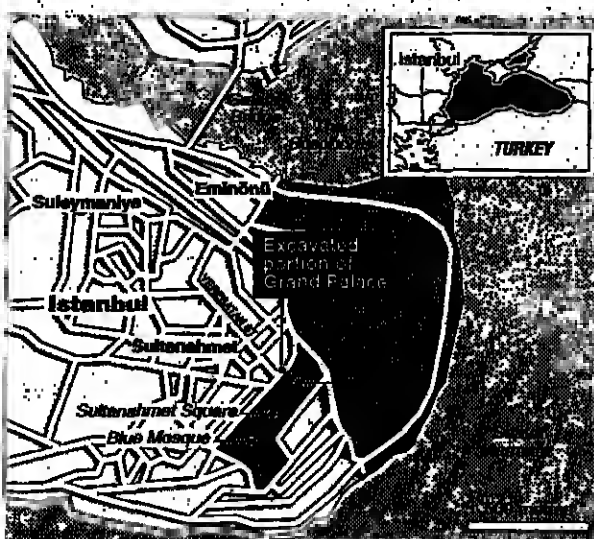
The archaeological team believe they may have found the palace archive where handwritten documents and icons were stored. They have also discovered vaulted corridors, a series of magnificent frescoes, and later additions to the palace made during the Ottoman era.

"The entrance is a lovely example of Ottoman architecture," Mr Pasinli said. "A narrow aisle then leads into the Byzantine section, where the walls are covered with coloured frescoes."

The frescoes show vegetables and floral patterns in vivid greens, reds and yellows. Experts describe them as masterpieces in technique and use of material.

The small portion of the palace excavated so far apparently dates from the 9th century, but construction is thought to have started 500 years earlier, with Emperor Constantine the Great inaugurating the new capital of the Roman Empire in AD 330.

For more than 1,000 years,



Constantinople was one of the most powerful cities in the world. At the height of its Christian era, it was also decorated with classical monuments from across the region.

Historians believe the palace complex once covered a huge triangular area, stretching from the palace next to Aya Sofya to the shores of the Sea of Marmara. It contained churches, gardens and ceremonial rooms, now buried beneath a bustling 20th century metropolis.

"Thousands of amazing sites are waiting to be discovered underneath the modern city," said Semavi Eyice, an expert in Byzantine history. "We never know exactly what will turn up next."

Some archaeologists complain it is too difficult for them to excavate properly in the centre of Istanbul, because of overcrowding and the presence of restricted military sites. "I'm glad they took this opportunity quickly when it came up," said one expert.

Critics of the way the modern city has been planned believe that ancient sites could be given much greater prominence, allowing Istanbul to compete with cities like Rome as important archaeological centres.

The rediscovered palace was at the heart of a flourishing empire for hundreds of years, but in the 11th century people began to leave for security reasons. After Constantinople

was sacked by the Fourth Crusade in 1204, the palace fell into disrepair. Constantinople was finally conquered by the Ottoman Turks in 1453, when it was renamed Istanbul.

Although it is too soon for visitors to be allowed access to the new excavations, city officials are already relishing the prospect of a boom in tourism if Istanbul adds another attraction to its current display of historical sites. That would be good news for Turkey's tourism industry, which is experiencing a bad year, with the number of visitors to Istanbul falling dramatically.

The archaeological team expect to find more hidden in intricate layers beneath the surface. Experts knew that the Grand Palace had once existed, but they were not able to begin excavations for many years, because a prison had occupied the site.

The site may help unravel many of the mysteries of a vast empire, which has become a modern byword for intrigue and double-dealing.

Report on Africa arms leaves Cook in the clear

Ian Black
Diplomatic Editor

ROBIN Cook, the Foreign Secretary, claimed total vindication last night over the arms-for-Africa affair after a Whitehall inquiry cleared ministers and blamed misjudgments by overworked officials for a breach of the UN embargo on Sierra Leone.

Launching a "sweeping programme" of reforms, that he pledged would give Britain a modern Foreign Office, Mr Cook confidently rebuffed criticism from Michael Howard, his Tory shadow, who insisted that the FO was in a shambles and asked when Mr Cook planned to resign.

In 160 closely written pages, the report by Sir Thomas Legg catalogues the chain of mistakes and misunderstandings that allowed a British security firm, Sandline International, to illegally supply arms to the West African country.

But it does little more than blame "management and cultural factors" for what went wrong and is unlikely to produce more than a rebuke for Peter Penfold, the High Commissioner in Sierra Leone, who the report says exceeded his authority in contacts with Sandline.

Mr Cook welcomed its findings in a Commons statement, promising there would be "no scapegoats" and pledging that "this should be the end of the matter as far as officials are concerned".

The report concluded that "some officials became aware of the need for the plan" to ship arms to Sierra Leone to aid President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah's bid to restore his government.

Mr Penfold, forced into exile in neighbouring Guinea with President Kabbah, was said to have given Sandline a degree of approval which "had no authority to do". But Mr Penfold did not know the shipment would be illegal and "no other official gave any encouragement or approval".

Mr Howard maintained the report was severely critical of ministers and officials.

But Mr Cook insisted that Sir Thomas Legg and Sir

'An embarrassing catalogue of error and inadequate management'

The Liberal Democrat foreign affairs spokesman, Menzies Campbell, said the inquiry had revealed a "sorry and embarrassing catalogue of error and inadequate management".

Mr Cook's widely trailed proposals to reform the FO include restoration of a sanctions enforcement unit to make sure that embargoes are fully observed, better procedures for handling intelligence reports, and banning contacts with private military firms unless authorised.

He also promised a programme of 60 different measures to improve effectiveness, including the recruitment of professional managers, though this is likely to meet resistance from officials who believe there has been enough change in recent years.

Mr Cook said he had asked the Permanent Secretary, Sir John Kyrle, to interview some of the relevant officials and to counsel them on the Legg report's findings about them.

Tough new code on lobbyists

David Hencke
Westminster Correspondent

TONY Blair last night announced that civil servants and ministers' political aides face the sack if they are caught leaking confidential information to lobbyists or giving their clients preferential access to government.

The action follows huge embarrassment for the Prime Minister after Derek Draper, the former lobbyist and aide to Peter Mandelson, was caught by the Observer boasting about his contacts with government.

The Downing Street policy unit adviser, Roger Liddle, also a close friend of Mr Mandelson, was accused by the newspaper of promising

special access to the Government — although he denied it. He used the words it ascribed to him.

The new code is much tougher than the one originally envisaged by Sir Richard Wilson, the Cabinet Secretary. This was ripped up by Mr Blair and the Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine, for being too unspecific and weak.

Instead, Mr Blair insisted on a list of do's and don'ts to ensure that no adviser or civil servant could be in any doubt about how to behave.

"It warns: 'Some things are completely unacceptable for instance: 'Do not leak confidential or sensitive material, especially market sensitive material, to a lobbyist. 'Do not deliberately help a lobbyist to attract business by

arranging for clients to have privileged access to ministers or undue influence over policy."

"These would be serious disciplinary offences and trigger procedures under which you would be liable for dismissal."

Other sections warn about accepting gifts, disclosing premature information, breaching parliamentary privilege, and being careful about accepting lobbyists' hospitality.

"Provided that you are satisfied about the propriety of accepting it may be legitimate to take modest hospitality from a lobbyist, but if you find this happening to you a lot, you should 'pull back quickly,'" it says.

The code gives the permanent secretary of a department

the right to ban some hospitality altogether.

There is also a warning about allowing lobbyists access to House of Commons select committee reports, which are released under embargo to witnesses to MPs' inquiries and journalists.

Any breach of these rules may lead to disciplinary action, it warns.

The guidelines also suggest that where clients of lobbyists are given access to put their case, civil servants should seek out opposing groups to present the counter argument. This would blunt the advantages lobbyists have in contacting and influencing government.

Common sense must prevail, says the guide, and personal friendships with lobbyists do not have to be severed.

Pilot fumes over smoking in loo row

John Hooper
in Rome

BRITISH airline pilot was last night under investigation in Italy after refusing to let passengers leave his aircraft until one of them owned up to smoking in the lavatory.

A police spokesman at Malpensa airport in Milan said Brian Bliss, aged 57, risked being charged with kidnapping.

He was escorted from his aircraft by police officers on Sunday evening after keeping the 148 passengers in their seats for 40 minutes after landing.

The incident took place at the end of a flight from Stansted operated by the low-cost British Airways subsidiary, Go. "It was found that someone had had a cigarette in the front toilet and had tried to conceal the fact by blocking the smoke detector with bits of a cigarette packet," said a spokeswoman for the airline. "This irresponsible act posed a risk to all 148

passengers and crew and Captain Bliss informed Italian police in advance."

She added: "Unfortunately, no one owned up to the smoking and eventually the police came on board and detained him for detaining the passengers against their will."

However, Italian police last night denied they had been warned. "He should have contacted us, instead of holding his passengers for 40 minutes," said a spokesman. "Even the pilot recognised that he had done something irregular."

Go's spokeswoman said that passengers had been generally supportive of the captain, who had later been allowed to pilot the return flight to Stansted.

"We have got our lawyers

involved in pursuing the matter. Captain Bliss has not been charged but we are concerned that he was detained at all," she added.

At Malpensa airport, the police spokesman said: "He was not arrested, but he was reported to the judicial authorities."

He is now under investigation. The charges which could be laid against him include kidnapping and assault.

Go said Captain Bliss, who is from Cambridge, had 37 years' experience of commercial flying. He worked for British Airways from 1970 until 1996, before moving to Ryanair, for whom he flew until September 1997.

Go began flights from Stansted to Milan in May.

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The reshuffle

Mandelson is intent on loosening Labour's ties with the unions. He has already interfered with the DTI on the minimum wage and union recognition

Blair courts trouble with choice for DTI

Ewen MacAskill, Chief Political Correspondent

TONY BLAIR yesterday opted for serious trouble by appointing Peter Mandelson as Trade and Industry Secretary.

There are few others moves he could have made that will prove as divisive. By giving Mr Mandelson a spending department, Mr Blair has put him directly against the Chancellor, Gordon Brown. Mr Blair is trying to use Mr Mandelson as a buffer against the Chancellor's empire, but, in doing so, he has also created the potential for serious rifts in the heart of the Government.

The Prime Minister's chief press officer insisted yesterday there was no "ideological division" between ministers. Maybe, but there are serious personality ones, none more bitter than that between Mr Mandelson and Mr Brown.

Both Mr Brown and Mr Mandelson realise the dangers, and Mr Brown phoned him at 7.30 yesterday morning to wish him well and to discuss for 10 minutes how they could work closely together, according to one aide.

But whatever Mr Brown's private views, his followers from ministers through to backbenchers — will not forgive Mr Mandelson for the way he behaved when forced to choose between Mr Brown and Mr Blair for the Labour leadership in 1994 — when a more astute approach would have been, as a friend of both,

to have adopted a neutral position.

Mr Brown's camp has whispered incessantly about Mr Mandelson. Some of them hoped the row over lobbyists, embroiling Mr Mandelson's friends, Derek Draper and Roger Liddle, would have left him vulnerable.

Unlike Mr Brown, Mr Mandelson does not have a huge following on the backbenches. There is no-one who could be described as Mandelsonian. But it does not matter. If you have only one friend in politics, then having the Prime Minister is not a bad one to have; and Mr Blair relies on Mr Mandelson a lot.

Personality clashes aside, Mr Mandelson's arrival at the trade department, or DTI, heralds a different approach from his predecessor, Margaret Beckett, who was instinctively closer to the unions. Mr Mandelson is closer to business and intent on loosening the party's ties with the unions. He interfered with the DTI on several occasions over the last 15 months over the minimum wage and union recognition.

There are lots of sensitive DTI decisions to be made in the near future — privatisation of the Post Office, the future of what is left of the coal industry, and liberalisation of the domestic electricity industry.

Peter Benjamin Mandelson was born into a political family. His mother, Mary, was the only daughter of the Labour Cabinet minister, Herbert Morrison, who helped organise the party's 1945 election victory and also



Baroness Jay leaving No 10 yesterday... 'she can flit people without them realising it,' a Whitehall official said

PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARON

Formidable Lords leader inherits family's values

Michael White reports

IT IS ironic that a Labour leadership committed to the abolition of voting rights for hereditary peers should appoint as Leader of the Lords, Margaret Jay, a peer whose father, Jim Callaghan, is also a peer.

Yet Baroness Jay of Paddington is a fierce meritocrat. What she inherited from her formidable parents were tough genes, her striking height (5ft 11in) and her political nous. "Margaret's bloody brilliant," gushed an official at the Department of

Health where she worked until yesterday. "She's sharp and clever and nasty when she has to be. She can flit people without them realising it."

Where she got her reputation as a femme fatale, immortalised as a thinly-disguised character in Nora Ephron's Washington novel and Hollywood film, *Heartburn*, is less easily traced.

Former prime minister, Lord Callaghan of Cardiff is pretty straight-laced for a party man. Only last week he voted against lowering

the age of consent for gays. Before he hinted at rebellion over student fees, in future his daughter will have to keep him in order.

Married aged 21 to Peter Jay, the glamorous son of a cabinet minister, Margaret was a supportive wife, refusing parliamentary seats because of the children and accompanying her husband to Washington as Daddy's US ambassador in 1977-79.

But her life as depicted in the gossip columns was only a part of it. She also

had social policy interests and after her 1986 divorce became vice-chairman of a health authority, and later director of the National Aids Trust.

Now aged 58 and married to Michael Adler, an Aids specialist, she inherits Lord Richard's John. Will Labour's commitment to a two-stage reform of the Lords be weakened? Some peers suspect so. But Baroness Jay is liked. "There will be cheers on both sides of the House," one Tory woman peer said last night.

the Festival of Britain, two roles that his grandson has sought to emulate, through both last year's election victory and the Millennium Dome, responsibility for which Mr Mandelson takes with him to the DTI.

A friend of Mr Mandelson said yesterday that his grandfather was very much in mind as he went up Downing Street to meet the Prime Minister at lunch-time for formal confirmation of his appointment to the Cabinet.

He was brought up in Hampstead in north London, his father working on the Jewish Chronicle, and went to grammar school nearby. He is often accused of being devoid of ideology and being interested primarily in power for power's sake, or for the access it provides to the world of movers and shakers, celebs and Royals. But that ignores a youthful Mr Mandelson who left the Labour Party, albeit briefly, to join the Young Communist League out of disgust at Labour's ambivalence over the Vietnam war. He also spent a year in a hospital in the African bush, working

as an orderly and teaching primary school children. He went on to study politics, philosophy and economics at Oxford, and from there went as a researcher to the Trades Union Congress.

He was elected onto Lambeth council in south London in 1979, where he met and became friends with a fellow councillor, Roger Liddle. Their careers have since been interlinked, and they co-authored a book, *The Blair Revolution*.

Mr Mandelson opted out of mainstream politics in the early 1980s to work in television but left to become Labour's director of communications on October 21, 1985, and embarked on the transformation of Labour from the party of the Red Flag to the party of the Red Rose, gaining a reputation as the ultimate spin-doctor, even though he has not formally had that role since the early 1990s.

He was not a backroom boy in the 1992 election, opting instead to concentrate on becoming an MP, winning Hartlepool in the next two years he was frozen out by the new party leader, John Smith, who believed spin-doctors should be invisible. Mr Blair's victory in the leadership contest in 1994 saw Mr Mandelson's career on the rise again, and in the 1996 general election he and Mr Brown ran the campaign, though there were tensions.

Post-election, Mr Mandelson became Minister without Portfolio, again mainly a backroom job.

On television, he often comes across as calculating, overly formal, cold, patronising, the embodiment of his

image as Prince of Darkness. In private, he can be charming, combining a sly smile with dry, sarcastic humour. He has a reputation, from his time as Labour's director of communications, for bullying journalists, cutting out those who wrote pieces he disagreed over. But this has been exaggerated: most journalists can look after themselves.

Neil Kinnock, the former party leader, summed him up well: "He is not half as good as he thinks he is, and not half as bad as everyone else thinks he is."

The new Cabinet

Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury, Minister for the Civil Service	Tony Blair, 45, £102,750
Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions	John Prescott, 50, £51,650
Chancellor of the Exchequer	Gordon Brown, 47, £51,650
Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs	Lord Robin Cook, 52, £51,650
The Lord Chancellor Lord Irvine of Lairg	58, £51,650
Secretary of State for the Home Office	Jack Straw, 51, £51,650
Secretary of State for Education and Employment	David Blunkett, 51, £51,650
President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons	Margaret Beckett, 55, £51,650
Minister for the Cabinet Office and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster	Dr Jack Cunningham, 58, £51,650
Secretary of State for Scotland	Donald Dewar, 60, £51,650
Secretary of State for Defence	George Robertson, 52, £51,650
Secretary of State for Health	Frank Dobson, 58, £51,650
Chief Whip	Ann Taylor, 51, £51,650
Secretary of State for National Heritage	Chris Smith, 47, £51,650
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland	Mo Mowlam, 48, £51,650
Secretary of State for Wales	Ron Davies, 51, £51,650
Secretary of State for International Development	Claire Short, 52, £51,650
Secretary of State for Social Security	Alistair Darling, 44, £51,650
Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food	Nick Brown, 48, £51,650
Leader of the Lords and Minister for Women	Baroness Jay of Paddington, 58, £50,107
Secretary of State for Trade and Industry	Peter Mandelson, 44, £51,650
Chief Secretary to the Treasury	Stephen Byers, 45, £51,650
Non members of Cabinet but will attend Cabinet meetings:	
Minister for Transport	Dr John Hogg, 51, £51,650
Government chief whip, House of Lords	The Lord Cullen, 55, £53,254

Official salaries not including MPs' salary of £45,066, although most cabinet members do not take their full entitlement

IN: New jobs for Brown, Beckett, Darling and Taylor

NICK BROWN, right, Chief Whip, was formally promoted yesterday to the Cabinet as Minister of Agriculture. But among Labour MPs it was seen as demotion. His problem is that he has not tried to hide his closeness to the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, being his main lieutenant in Parliament. Nick Brown was blamed for helping the journalist Paul Routledge to put together a book last year about the depth of the Chancellor's desire to become Prime Minister. Although MPs could see the need for a chief whip who owed his position to the Prime Minister, or at least was equidistant between the Prime Minister and the Chancellor, many expressed disappointment at his departure. One MP said: "I felt comfortable with him. Better the devil you know." Another said he was friendly, easy-going, not from the dictatorial school of whips.

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ALISTAIR DARLING, right, had doubts about his career move within weeks of arriving in the Commons in 1987, having given up a successful life in the legal profession in Edinburgh. He dived on him quickly that he faced years in Opposition, powerless to influence events. But he stuck with it and was among the first of the 1987 intake to be promoted. For 15 months he has helped the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, to shape the Government's economic policy as Chief Secretary to the Treasury, responsible for departmental spending. But as Social Services Secretary he has the opportunity he sought in 1987 to change policy. He has been given one of the toughest briefs.

Darling, aged 44, the youngest member of the Cabinet, has gradually shifted to the centre from the left of the party. He has skillfully remained on side not only with Tony Blair but also with Brown, his boss at the Treasury. Blair told Darling yesterday that the next six months were going to be the key to welfare reform, that there was a need for reform in four key areas in this Parliament: pensions, disability and industrial injuries benefits, widows' benefits and contribution conditions for insurance benefits.

ANN TAYLOR, right, had to be persuaded last year to accept Tony Blair's offer to become Leader of the Commons, the first woman in the post. Yesterday she had no such hesitation in accepting the job she had wanted all along. The move to Chief Whip is also a first in a still-blokeish Commons where Labour has long had a mixed record. Now 51 and MP for Dewsbury since 1987, she is on the "sensible" Old Labour right but adapted to the modernisers' era. As Commons leader she has gently modernised its antique hours and habits — too slowly say new MPs; too fast, says old hands. Blair called her "tough and popular."

John Smith made his old chum opposition leader in the Lords in 1992, and Tony Blair left him there, but he was definitely Old Labour, getting old and not a chum. Nor was he close to Lord Irvine, the Blairite Lord Chancellor, or a Lords "club favourite". It meant that when Lords reform got into trouble Richard, now 66, was an obvious scapegoat.

OUT: Clark, Strang and Richard are scapegoats

DAVID CLARK, right, sacked yesterday as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, never expected to last more than a year. His main projects at the Cabinet Office were to bring forward a freedom of information bill ready for the Queen's Speech this year and to prevent the millennium bug from wrecking Whitehall computer systems. He succeeded in both, but his period in office was overshadowed by battles with Peter Mandelson, then minister without portfolio, over the running of the Cabinet Office. He was often portrayed as a lacklustre figure with little clout among cabinet colleagues. Those close to him

said this was a travesty of the truth, but even some of his friends thought he should have "retired" more with those colleagues as soon as he got into government. His fightback, aimed entirely at getting an FOI bill ready in time, came too late to turn the tide. He did prevent Mandelson from getting the "enforcer" job, but the real test will be

whether the FOI bill makes it into the Queen's Speech in its present form. This will be decided this week. **DAVID HENCKE** **GAVIN STRANG**, right, sacked as Minister of Transport in the Cabinet, never really stood a chance in the job from day one. His role was overshadowed by John Prescott, Deputy Prime Minister, who headed the super-ministry which combines environment, transport and the regions. But he did not make a good impression, even as number two to Prescott. He was described by colleagues as indecisive and vacillating. His first attempt at a white paper

on transport had to be abandoned only days after he had drawn it up, and he never seemed to have any grip on the department. Other initiatives, including curbs on drink-driving, ended up as consultation exercises rather than having the smack of firm government. And he was shown up by bright colleagues in the ministry — notably Nick Raynsford, responsible for London, and

Michael Meacher and **Angela Eagle**, responsible for the environment. **DAVID HENCKE** **IVOR RICHARD**, right, sacked as Leader of the Lords, is a politician who seems to have been around for ever and done everything. The QC was first elected MP for Barons Court in 1964 when he was 32, became a junior minister under Harold Wilson, but lost his seat in 1974, never to return to the Commons. It did not stop him. He was Britain's man at the United Nations, 1974-79, and a European Commissioner, 1981-84, and had lots of big committee jobs — always a solid, reliable figure.

John Smith made his old chum opposition leader in the Lords in 1992, and Tony Blair left him there, but he was definitely Old Labour, getting old and not a chum. Nor was he close to Lord Irvine, the Blairite Lord Chancellor, or a Lords "club favourite". It meant that when Lords reform got into trouble Richard, now 66, was an obvious scapegoat.

July 28 1998

The reshuffle

Decline and fall after feuds over welfare

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

AT THE height of media speculation about sour and destructive working relations between the two senior ministers at the Department of Social Security, Frank Field was astonished to receive a telephone call from Harriet Harman. "How are you, Frank?" she asked. "When are we having our regular meeting?"

Harman, Social Security Secretary, and Mr Field, Minister for Welfare Reform, has undoubtedly hobbled the Government's attempts to get to grips with reform of the £100 billion welfare budget.

There have been public protestations to the contrary — most famously when Mr Field told the social security select committee that reports that he held a low opinion of Ms Harman, who was sitting next to him, were "untrue and must be hurtful".

In private, though, advisers to each minister continued relentlessly to brief against the other, even after Tony Blair made it clear the feud was damaging the Government and had to stop. Both in action and words, Downing Street yesterday was leaving no doubt that such behaviour was beyond the pale.

Sages will say that this conclusion was all too predictable. Mr Field, brought in to think the unthinkable on welfare, came with a maverick



Harriet Harman yesterday... in recent weeks she had been making increasingly frantic efforts to talk up her stock

PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARNON

reputation and plenty of ideas but no front-bench experience and — perhaps crucially — little evidence of skills as a teamworker.

As MP for Birkenhead since 1979, he fought a long battle against far-left activists in his constituency. He became a hero of the tabloid press as a scourge of not only the left but also the worksite, a role he cultivated under the last government as chairman of the social security select committee.

By contrast, Ms Harman

spoke for Labour in opposition on Treasury issues, employment, health and social security. She has suffered a highly critical press, however, due to her supposedly haughty style and modest ability and her rejection of local schools for her children.

She started in government with a nose put firmly out of joint by her deputy's high-profile role. Piqued also by media surprise at her appointment, she was determined to prove that she had the toughness to run the big-

gest budget in government and the creativeness needed to reform it through welfare-to-work policies.

Fatally, the acid test of her toughness came quickly and proved to be the decision on whether to continue with the last government's plans to cut benefit rates for new lone parents. To the fury of Labour backbenchers, leading to a revolt in the lobbies, Ms Harman decided toughness meant proceeding with the cut rather than telling the Treasury she would find the rela-

tively small savings elsewhere.

Her desperation to show her creativity meanwhile, led to her trampling across Mr Field's reform blueprints. He was anyway finding it hard to reconcile the harsh realities of wrestling with the gargantuan benefits system with his blue-sky vision of a welfare state re-established on contributory principles, administered not by government but by a nationwide patchwork of mutual insurers.

Within four months of his

appointment, he was dampening expectations of a "big bang" of welfare reform. Within a year, the man who in opposition had denounced means testing as a cancer eating away at the nation was accepting it had "an important part to play". His welfare reform green paper, published in March after his redrafting, asked more questions than it answered.

Since the spring Mr Field has cut an isolated figure, making the best list he could of a recently added responsi-

bility to crack down on benefit fraud. Ms Harman, feeling the cold draft of the falling axe, has been making increasingly frantic efforts to talk up her stock — notably overreaching herself last week in comments on regulation of childminders and nannies.

The pair are not expected to go to ground. Ms Harman, 48, on Thursday, is already hinting at a future return. Mr Field, a youthful 56, is likely within days to be active on the backbenches and in the media.

Treasury's latest addition publicly failed to multiply

Lucy Ward reports

AS SCHOOLS standards minister, Stephen Byers famously got in a muddle with his times tables while explaining how to teach numeracy. With his elevation to Chief Secretary to the Treasury, he has proved that Tony Blair still trusts his maths as well as his judgement, and has demonstrated how fierce ambition, ability and understanding of the art of getting on can add up to promotion and a seat at the cabinet table.

The MP for Tyneside North — from Labour's high-flying, 40-something, North-eastern coterie, which includes Mr Blair, Peter Mandelson and Health Minister Alan Milburn — is a loyal Blairite long tipped to move from the Department for Education and Employment to a more senior role.

His time in government has shown him to be an effective and amiable minister (that tables safe aside), who carved out a role as departmental hard man, deaf to the complaints

of teachers in promoting the standards crusade beloved of the Prime Minister.

If David Blunkett, Education and Employment Secretary, had early doubts about the confident moderniser who spoke so enthusiastically of "naming and shaming" failing schools, he swiftly put them aside to let his junior enjoy a generous share of the limelight — and absorb some of the teaching unions' flak.

Mr Byers, aged 45, per-

sonable and well groomed in elegantly understated suits and media glasses, grew up in Derbyshire and Cheshire, the son of an RAF radar technician.

He joined the Labour Party in 1974 while studying law at Liverpool polytechnic and kicked off his political career as a borough councillor in North Tyneside after starting work as a lecturer. He shone in local government, serving from 1989 as national spokesman on local education authorities

— which no longer view him as quite the friend he was.

Showing his ability to identify the winning side, he backed Neil Kinnock in his drive to modernise the Labour Party, and after winning his Westminster seat in 1992 he swiftly made his name with his capacity to lever open the fault lines in Tory education policies, developing along the way a renowned media-banking ability.

With Mr Blair's elevation to the party leadership pro-

motion came quickly and Mr Byers moved from the whips' office to a front bench role as employment spokesman.

It was here that his off-the-record briefing in a Blackpool fish restaurant led journalists to report that Labour planned to sever its ties with the unions. Mr Byers spoke of "candidates for the Booker Prize for fiction". Observers who predicted that the "gaffe" would do his career no harm must today be congratulating themselves.

In Downing Street, as Mr Field retreated into his ministerial car for the last time, Harriet Harman was saying farewells across the road at the DSS

Lucy Ward and Ewen MacAskill on the reshuffle choreography which was aimed at hiding unsightly grief but upset by minister's resignation on camera

DOWNING Street yesterday became a reshuffle catwalk for model ministers blessed with promotion — or at least face-saving sideways moves — as Tony Blair revealed what the fashionable Cabinet will look like this summer.

A string of promotees sought with varying degrees of success to stifle broad grins in front of waiting media, during a long morning of meetings at No 10, some lasting up to an hour.

Those no longer among the beautiful people were told the news by phone or in private meetings in Mr Blair's Commons office, keeping unsightly grief away from intruding lenses.

Only Frank Field, the outgoing social security minister, managed to interrupt the stage management and create a moment of real drama by resigning on camera, in front of No 10.

Striding set-faced from the Prime Minister's door, he told the cluster of waiting reporters: "I have decided to resign from the Government. Welfare reform is the central subject of this Government. I believe I can support the Prime Minister more effectively from the backbenches to achieve that objective, rather than the positions that were discussed."

Those positions included a post as a cross-departmental "fraud tsar" — Mr Field declined even to turn up at Downing Street to refuse that one — and another reputedly as drugs policy enforcer, but

not the job of social security secretary he coveted. The day of personal drama began as a rough idea in the mind of Tony Blair a few weeks ago, according to his chief press officer.

In the last week, it began to crystallise, and on Sunday, in the company of his advisers, the Prime Minister finalised it.

Confirmation in the morning that Mr Blair's first reshuffle was under way started the inevitable round of letters. MPs stayed away from the Commons in the morning, the hopeful sitting close to phones. But by afternoon MPs were in the Commons in droves, swapping gossip about who was in and out.

"Any more bullets?", one Labour MP said, wanting to know if there had been any more casualties.

There were middle-ranking and junior ministers fearful they would lose their jobs today. And there were MPs hopeful of promotion, although often insisting they had long since lost any expectation.

Andrew MacKinlay, the maverick Labour MP who last month urged Mr Blair to end the speechness among Labour MPs at Prime Minister's Question Time, had absolutely no expectations.

He told his assistant that if any calls came through, he was to ignore them because the only ones he envisaged would be spoof ones. In Downing Street, as Mr Field retreated into his minis-



Frank Field after refusing a Cabinet post and publicly resigning

Alistair Darling, like his replacement as Treasury Chief Secretary Stephen Byers, maintained his expression of New Labour earnestness even after being told of his promotion, despite photographer's calls of "Over here, Darling".

Margaret Beckett, ousted from the Department of Trade and Industry to make way for Peter Mandelson, managed a professional if edgy smile, but looked less than pleased with her new role as Leader of the Commons.

"She's not at all happy," said one colleague later. "That's an understatement," another said.

Mr Mandelson was asked by a journalist if he was having a good day. The master of spin replied enigmatically: "I think so. I think you will like it."

Mr Mandelson was phoned early in the morning by the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, who said he had read about his new job in the Sun, which had the headline President Mandelson.

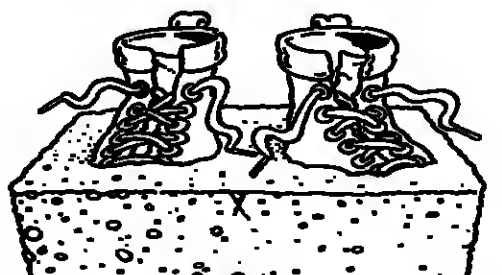
It was only half right. Mr Mandelson had the job but did not want the antiquated title of President of the Board of Trade: he will instead be simply Secretary of State for Trade and Industry.

Downing Street released the names of the new Cabinet soon after 2pm, and then it was the turn of the middle-ranking and junior ministers, whom Mr Blair saw in his Commons office.

A sad stream of the doomed flowed into the Prime Minister's room behind the Speaker's chair — one so unfamiliar with the territory that he had to be shown the way down the long corridor by a Commons official.

There was no government chauffeur-driven car waiting at the end. Baroness Jay, new Leader of the Lords and Minister for Women, gave a cheery swing of her yellow handbag as reporters pressed her for a comment, while Ann Taylor — who retains her Cabinet post and becomes the first female chief whip — could not hold back a broad smirk.

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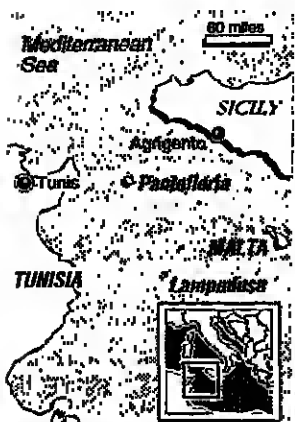
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An Italian soldier offers water to Kurds at a detention centre for illegal immigrants near Otranto, southern Italy. Boatloads of people are caught daily

PHOTOGRAPH: DARIO CARCATO

Italians fire at rioting illegal migrants



John Hooper in Rome

POLICE opened fire on a riot at a Sicilian detention camp for illegal immigrants yesterday, wounding two men. Several police officers and a third migrant were injured in the clash. About 20 migrants face criminal charges after the attempt to break out of the improvised detention centre in Agrigento.

The bloodshed was the first since Italy, under pressure from its European partners, introduced tougher rules on immigration in March. Most

of the would-be migrants from Africa and Asia are unaware of the clampdown, and more than 100 a day are being caught.

The trouble broke out late on Sunday at a warehouse on an industrial estate near the Sicilian town, where about 200 migrants are held. They were caught and sent to Sicily earlier this month after landing on the Italian islands of Pantelleria, south-west of Sicily, and Lampedusa, off the coast of Tunisia.

Until four months ago, the islands offered virtually guaranteed access to the European Union. As soon as would-be

migrants reached Italian territorial waters, the authorities were obliged to escort them to the nearest court-house, which is at Agrigento. There, they were served with effectively meaningless expulsion orders and set free. But under the new rules, illegal immigrants can be detained pending repatriation.

The group at the warehouse had been held for four days when, says Agrigento's prefect, Giosue Marino, they made a "full-blown attempt at mass escape". Blocked by the police guarding them, the detainees reportedly smashed tables and chairs, ripped out

pipes and destroyed sinks. Some climbed on to the roof of the warehouse and hurled the police with stones and bottles, injuring 10. According to the official account, the officer in charge ordered his men to fire warning shots and two immigrants were grazed by ricochets.

Hospital sources said yesterday the two men would be ready to leave hospital in five to seven days. A third detainee was said to have broken his leg when he fell from the roof.

Italy tightened its immigration rules after joining the Schengen pact abolishing

frontier controls between EU member states. Last week the interior minister, Giorgio Napolitano, told a parliamentary committee that almost 3,000 migrants had been caught on arrival since the start of July.

At the weekend the foreign minister, Lamberto Dini, went to Rabat, Morocco, for a diplomatic offensive aimed at negotiating admission deals with the countries of North Africa. So far, he said, the response from Morocco had been more helpful than that of Tunisia. But it is from Tunisia that the majority of ramshackle fishing boats set off for the Italian islands.

Row over Duras biography muddies fact and fiction

The late writer's son is trying to defend her honour, writes Paul Webster

THE son of Marguerite Duras, one of the most celebrated French authors of the 20th century, yesterday angrily denied claims that his mother had been a prostitute in French Indo-China, worked for the Nazis and helped to torture a collaborator while she was allegedly having an affair with a French Gestapo agent.

Jean Mascolo, born shortly after his mother finished her first novel, *Les Impudents*, in 1943, said Laure Adler, a biographer, was distorting his mother's life. He had allowed the writer to search through 18 boxes of documents found in Duras's left bank Paris flat and at seaside and country homes.

Duras, who died in March 1996 aged 81, is at the centre of the biggest international literary industry of recent years, as biographers and critics rush to examine the books, plays and films which were almost entirely inspired by her own life.

Until now Mr Mascolo has kept out of the row, even ignoring an Italian biographer's claim that he had proof that Duras was the product of a liaison between her mother and a Chinese businessman.

Mr Mascolo says some of the allegations in Ms Adler's biography, due to be published by Gallimard at the end of the month, are "unbearable".

He accuses Ms Adler, a former cultural adviser to the late president François Mitterrand, of drawing on draft manuscripts his mother had thrown out.

Ms Adler's account of Duras's life was already guaranteed to be the country's publishing event of the year after stories circulated that the real affair

that inspired *The Lover*, Duras's account of an adolescent girl's affair with a Chinese man which was turned into a film, was not as romantic as the one portrayed in her book.

Ms Adler claimed to have found Duras's diary in which the author said that the relationship was arranged by her mother because her Chinese lover paid for sex and the money was used to settle debts incurred by Duras's brother.

"My grandmother was a rather stiff, head teacher who would never have sold her daughter," Mr Mascolo said.

He first broke his silence after Ms Adler said she had proof that Duras worked as a prostitute in Indo-China, a senior official for the Vichy government, controlling the amount of paper given to favoured writers.

This amounts to calling her a collaborator, he said, adding that he also resented accusations that his mother, who was born in Saigon, was a fervent colonialist because she co-authored a book on the



The late Marguerite Duras: Accused of being a prostitute and collaborating with Nazis

French Empire under her real name, Donnadieu.

"She was only the ghost writer for an old fellow, as well as being his mistress," he said.

Mr Mascolo also rejected claims that his mother had an affair with a Gestapo agent, Charles Delval, who had arrested her husband, Robert Antelme.

"The story of my mother's relationship with Delval [who was executed] was not ambiguous," Mr Mascolo said. "It was a beautiful story. My mother dined with the man who arrested her husband to try to save him."

He said Ms Adler was wrong to use the 1985 novel *La Douleur* (The Pain) as proof that his mother joined in torture sessions after joining the Resistance. The book had been written 40 years after the event "when my mother's mind was wandering".

Another biographer, Alain Vircondelet, who had an affair with Duras, said

all interpretations of her work were valid because "she invented her own life and legend".

She did not reveal the secret of her Chinese lover until she was 70, and she told Mr Vircondelet that she only realised the treachery of Vichy after her husband was arrested.

He added that if Duras had not participated in torture "she would have liked to, because she reached into the most obscure corners of human nature".

Nurse's mercy killings fuel French furore

A murder inquiry into the deaths of 30 patients has revived an issue which splits the country, reports Jon Henley in Paris

FRANCE yesterday reopened a long-running and bitterly divisive debate over euthanasia in the wake of revelations that a 28-year-old nurse from a hospital near Paris faces murder charges after admitting she helped 30 terminally ill patients in her care to die.

The case, the biggest of its kind ever known in France, has split the medical profession, for which the subject of mercy killing has long been taboo. It has also provoked strong responses from many pro-euthanasia MPs and an equally fierce denunciation from the Catholic Church.

The health minister, Bernard Kouchner, expressed deep sympathy for the nurse, Christine Malèvre, and reiterated his view that doctors should not keep patients alive against their will. But he stopped short of calling for a law on euthanasia.

"I feel great compassion for this nurse, who must not be made to feel alone and lost, like so many sick people iso-

lated and cloistered in wards where people are watching them die," the minister said. But while he admitted the subject was "neither discussed enough nor taken seriously enough" in France, he said euthanasia was unacceptable under French law.

He also promised better care for the terminally ill. "That did not satisfy some MPs, who insisted on a full parliamentary debate on decriminalising mercy killing. 'It is now imperative that parliament reopens this debate and that the government puts on the agenda all the various proposals that have been made to ensure patients can die with dignity,' the radical Socialist MP Roger-Gérard Schwartzberg said. 'It is time to truly listen to the terminally ill, to show true compassion.'"

The right-to-die debate has long been stifled in France, where the Catholic Church still holds considerable sway. The word euthanasia does not feature in the French penal

code, and in 1991 the government banned the self-help suicide book *Final Exit*, by the founder of the United States' Hemlock Society, Derek Humphrey.

Unlike the Netherlands, where doctors are guaranteed freedom from prosecution as long as they fulfil certain strict conditions, French law treats active euthanasia — administering a substance likely to hasten death — as murder, with a maximum 30-year jail term. Passive euthanasia — halting treatment — is classed as failure to assist a person in danger.

The daily newspaper *Libération* said in its editorial yesterday: "Reform is certainly long overdue — a reform that would honour the government and reduce the wide gap that has opened between France and some of its neighbours on the subject of euthanasia."

Euthanasia is still illegal in Britain and Germany. The US state of Oregon has passed a mercy-killing law, and similar legislation is due to be debated in Michigan this autumn. But an act legalising the practice passed in Australia's Northern Territory in 1995 was rescinded by parliament last year.

Senator Henri Caillavet, the president of the French right-to-die association ADMD, who first tabled a white paper on euthanasia in 1976, pointed out that "administrative euthanasia" was already widespread in France, with some surveys showing that as many as one in two hospital deaths of terminally ill patients amounted to passive euthanasia.

"Of course, this is hypocrisy. I want legislation, in other words clarity, with everyone being able to accept or refuse," he said.

But many doctors, backed by the Church, refuse to countenance any move towards decriminalisation. "We are not at liberty to dispose of other people's lives, nor our own," said André Vingt-Trois, the auxiliary bishop of Paris. "Talk of relieving suffering cannot and must not be used to subtly introduce the liberty to take someone's life."

Dr Thierry Marquet, head of a terminal care ward at a hospital in Toulouse, said: "We do not have the right to perform euthanasia on our patients. It implies a judgment based on the view that the patient's life is not worth living. We do not do it here."

Profile/Star graduate who helped the sick die

CHRISTINE Malèvre, the nurse who is being investigated for murder after helping 30 elderly cancer patients to die, graduated top of her class from nursing school, her boss said yesterday, writes Jon Henley.

"She was sensitive and conscientious, and always showed tremendous devotion to her duty," Dr Olivier Ille said of the nurse, who joined the François-Queyriaux hospital in Mantes-la-Jolie, a suburb west of Paris, in late 1995. "She was very close to her patients, without ever betraying any difficulties she may have had with their suffering."

The hospital director, Henri Gosset, said dozens of people had called the hospital "to express their support and sympathy. In their eyes, this nurse has shortened the suffering of terminally ill patients by allowing them to die a dignified death."

Ms Malèvre, who attempted suicide immediately after the mercy killings were discovered, was suspended in May and placed under formal investigation for murder — one step short of being charged — on July 8.

According to police, she has admitted ending the lives of about 30 terminally ill patients aged between 70 and 84, during the course of some 18 months, starting in January last year.

A judicial source said Ms Malèvre had acted "at the request of the patients' families, and at the request of the patients themselves". None of the families involved has filed a lawsuit, and the investigation had shown that she was not acting for money, in her own interests or at the behest of any pro-euthanasia association.

She is currently receiving psychiatric treatment in a sanatorium west of Paris.

Germany finds Blair 'varnish is peeling'

Dennis Stannett in Berlin

GERMANY'S infatuation with Tony Blair cooled sharply yesterday when the leading news magazine *Der Spiegel* dismissed the Prime Minister as a failure who is unlikely ever to achieve a leadership role in Europe.

In an article entitled "Blair: the varnish is peeling", the magazine claims Labour's vision of a new Britain is being derailed amid mounting economic problems and creeping government sleaze.

Quoting several financial analysts, including the investment bankers Salomon Smith Barney, it concludes that Britain is set to regain its reputation as "the sick man of Europe" with the return of mass unemployment and high inflation.

"Instead of celebrating a new British Age at the Millennium Dome in Greenwich at the turn of the millennium, the nation has to acknowledge that the old British sickness has obviously still not been conquered," *Der Spiegel* said.

According to the magazine, Labour has failed to reform the welfare state, botched devolution to Scotland and Wales and been humiliated by the House of Lords. It blames arrogant young party apparatchiks for the recent scandals involving Labour lobbyists, but does not exempt Mr Blair entirely.

"Dubious donations such as that of £1 million from the Formula 1 tycoon Bernie Ecclestone and numerous 'private visits' by the media baron Rupert Murdoch to the

Prime Minister's official residence have contributed to the erosion of New Labour's good reputation."

German commentators have enthused about Mr Blair since Labour took office, contrasting his dynamism with Bonn's dreary political class. But the slow-down in Britain's economy coincides with recovery and a drop in unemployment in Germany.

Gerhard Schröder, the Social Democrat candidate for chancellor in September's federal election, has sought to present himself as a version of Mr Blair. But as fears of a British recession grow, Mr Schröder has made fewer references to the Prime Minister.

At an Anglo-German economic forum in Berlin last week, Mr Schröder identified the Netherlands as the neighbour as a version of Mr Blair. But as fears of a British recession grow, Mr Schröder has made fewer references to the Prime Minister.

He has abandoned caution about European integration as he prepares to take over Chancellor Helmut Kohl's role as the paramount leader within the European Union.

"Der Spiegel argues that Britain's decision not to join Economic and Monetary Union at its launch in 1999 has scuppered Mr Blair's hopes of leading Europe."

Russians bristle at UK visa queries

James Meek in Moscow

SUPERBLY organised, punctual — and rude. That's Britain as seen through the eyes of Russian travel agents, who have rated the British consulate in Moscow a dismal 28th out of 30 for its treatment of Russian tourists trying to get visas to travel abroad.

The collapse of the Iron Curtain and the growth of the domestic package-tour industry have left millions of Russians saving their roubles for a once-in-a-lifetime trip to countries which, less than 10 years ago, they could never have dreamt of visiting.

But a survey of more than 150 tour firms in the Russian capital reveals deep resentment at the probing and personal questioning a percentage of visa applicants are subjected to by staff at the British embassy.

Had it not been for the hostile behaviour of the interview staff, said Valery Vlasov, director of the East European Institute for Social Technology and Tourism which carried out the survey, the British consulate would have been one of the highest rated. As it was, only Greece and Italy were more disliked.

"Unlike the Americans, whose interviewers are more friendly, the British consulate often puts improper, insulting questions," he said.

He cited two female friends, planning to travel to Britain together, who were asked if they were lesbians. One interviewer trying to judge how well-off a family was asked a child if he slept in the same bed as his parents.

A man who wanted to go to Britain to study English was told: "Why do you want to study English? You speak it well enough already."

Mr Vlasov said: "All the agencies who talked about the British consulate spoke of the rude manner of the questioners. As a result many said they would not plan to send people to Britain any more."

The friendliest European consulates were Denmark, Switzerland, Spain and France. Germany only just scraped in above Britain.

A hurt British embassy spokesman defended the work of the consulate, which last year issued 88,000 visas to Russians. He said what Russians disliked most was being asked about their income, fearing that consular officials would betray them to the taxman.

"How is it that when the US refuses visas to 30 per cent of applicants, and in 1996 we only refused 3 per cent, they come in 16th and we're 28th?"

Mr Vlasov said all the respondents praised the organisation of the British consulate. There is no minimum income for visitors to Britain, but Mr Vlasov said anyone earning less than £3,125 a year — a large amount in Russia — was looked on suspiciously.

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مكتبة الصالح

Albright warns Burmese junta as fears grow for health of 'captive' democracy leader



Aung San Suu Kyi. Four nights spent in a parked car

Nicholas Cumming-Bruce

A WHITE sedan occupied by the Burmese pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi and surrounded by security agents has become the focus of a deepening row with the ruling military junta that is stirring international concern.

Ms Suu Kyi, leader of the National League for Democracy (NLD), yesterday prepared to spend her fourth consecutive night in the car, parked where military agents stopped it on a rural highway 40 miles west of Rangoon, in protest at the junta's moves to stop her visiting NLD members outside the capital.

The NLD leader, aged 53, and two colleagues, surviving on biscuits, have refused to answer questions from security men or meet their "request" that they return to Rangoon. Although Ms Suu Kyi is nominally free to travel, it was the third time in as many weeks that authorities stopped her leaving Rangoon.

Authorities said they had intervened either because Ms Suu Kyi had left the capital without her security detail or out of concern that her rural visits might cause political disturbances.

The United States secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, warned that Washington would hold the junta "directly responsible" for the health and safety of Ms Suu Kyi. Ms Albright said she "just wanted to make clear how we deplore the government of Burma's refusal to allow the National League of Democracy, a legal political party, to travel freely in its own country."

She added that refusing freedom of movement to the NLD "can only increase the already dangerous state of tension in Burma". Speaking in the Philippines capital, Manila, at a meeting of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (Asean) and Asia-Pacific powers, she warned that "with each passing day the likelihood of social breakdown, or explosion, that would undermine regional stability grows higher."

The row coincides with rising tension caused by decades of economic misrule and fears that the country is sliding fast towards fresh political turmoil.

Next month marks both the 10th anniversary of the military's brutal suppression of country-wide pro-democracy demonstrations and the deadline Ms Suu Kyi has set for the junta for convening the parliament elected in 1990 with a powerful NLD majority but never called.

Britain 'ready for Palestinian state'

Julian Borger in Jerusalem

THE Palestinian envoy to London, Afif Safieh, claimed yesterday that Britain had signalled its readiness to recognise a Palestinian state if it were backed by a referendum in the West Bank and Gaza.

A British diplomat, however, described the Palestinian reading of how far Britain would be prepared to go in support of Palestinian statehood as "misconceived".

There had been no change in official policy, a Foreign Office spokesman said, which was to support Palestinian self-determination only as part of a wider negotiated Israeli-Palestinian settlement.

The development follows 16 months of deadlock in the Oslo peace process. Diplomatic sources said Britain had been considering its responses if the Palestinian Authority president, Yasser Arafat, declares statehood next May, as he has pledged to do if there is no radical progress in negotiations by then.

Mr Safieh, the head of the Palestinian general delegation in London, said he had been briefed by the Foreign Office on the results of a confidential in-house study mapping out Britain's options.

According to Mr Safieh, the study said: "If repeated by a referendum the results of which were convincing, European countries like Britain would have no reason not to recognise a Palestinian state."

Asked whether he interpreted the briefing as a British "green light", Mr Safieh said: "The message is clear."

He added: "I have faxed President Arafat that this is the British advice about a referendum which I consider interesting and worth noting."

She also said the British study had concluded that Israeli attempts to block a Palestinian plebiscite would backfire. British officials refused to comment on the existence of a Foreign Office contingency plan. One diplomat said: "It's clear that somewhere along the way things have been misconceived."

Britain and its European partners have been trying to exert pressure on Benjamin Netanyahu's government to accelerate implementation of the Oslo peace accord.

They are particularly frustrated by Mr Netanyahu's rejection so far of a United States proposal for troop withdrawals from the West Bank and his continued support for the construction of Jewish settlements there.

In May the Foreign Office formally upgraded the status of the Palestinian delegation in London, according to semi-diplomatic privileges.

Earlier this month the Israeli press quoted French diplomats as saying Paris would recognise a Palestinian state as soon as it was declared.

Three months ago Hillary Clinton also voiced support in a radio interview for the creation of a Palestinian state.

Washington quickly distanced itself from her remarks, but they were interpreted by the Palestinian leadership as a wink of support from the White House.

Ghassan Khatib, a political analyst in Jerusalem, said the prospect of a Palestinian state was being used by both Mr Arafat and the European Union to exert pressure on Mr Netanyahu.

But Mr Khatib said Mr Arafat's declaration of statehood, scheduled for May 4 1999 — the expiry of the transition period envisaged by the Oslo peace accord — was not a foregone conclusion.

He said: "If there is a deal reached over the next Israeli troop redeployment (as proposed by the US), then I think one of the Israeli conditions will be for the Palestinians to declare a state. So the Palestinians are using the threat of a declaration as a kind of bargaining card."

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News in brief

Serbs claim road is retaken as offensive continues in Kosovo

SERBIAN security forces have cleared a major road in Kosovo after pushing back ethnic Albanian guerrillas who had blocked it for more than two months, it was claimed yesterday.

A report by the official Yugoslav news agency said that journalists would be escorted along the main east-west road between the Kosovo capital Pristina and Pec to prove it was open. The road would reopen for traffic once technical conditions and security permitted, it added.

Papuan boys feared dead in revival of cannibal rite

Christopher Zinn in Vanimo

THE priest leading Papua New Guinea's tidal wave relief programme turned his attention to a new horror facing the country yesterday when he claimed young boys were being killed and eaten by witch doctors in the bush.

Father Jim Cougher said two boys aged about six had been murdered by the *sunguma* men, and eight others were missing and presumed victims of cannibalism in villages just 25 minutes' flight from his Roman Catholic mission in Vanimo.

The missionary, who has been in the country for 36 years and commands great respect, said that in nominally Christian villages in the Wamengia area parents were "virtually sacrificing" their own children.

The *sunguma* are still feared and powerful figures in remote settlements and are believed to have the power to kill by suggestion. "People believe the *sunguma* have diabolical powers," he said.

There is no link with the villages devastated by the tidal wave or tsunami, and eight others were missing and presumed victims of cannibalism in villages just 25 minutes' flight from his Roman Catholic mission in Vanimo.

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Talks halt Bissau war

A FRAGILE ceasefire came into force in Guinea-Bissau yesterday after nearly two months of civil war, writes Alex Duval Smith in Johannesburg.

The truce, between government troops and rebels demanding the resignation of President Joao Vieira, was brokered by other former Portuguese colonies. It is expected to allow for peace talks within eight days and international aid to be delivered to up to 300,000 displaced people.

Cambodian poll 'unfair'

CAMBODIAN opposition parties claimed yesterday that vote counting in Sunday's general election was unfair as early estimates showed that Prince Norodom Ranariddh'sFUNCINPEC party and the ruling Cambodian People's Party of the first prime minister, Hun Sen, were very close.

However, the opposition predicted that irregularities in counting would see Hun Sen pull away for clear victory. — Reuters.

men will join the UN observers' mission in Georgia and four will be joining a new mission in Sierra Leone.

Pisa plans

A Chinese engineer who has strengthened 60 slanted structures in China says his patented technique should be able to right the famed leaning tower of Pisa in Italy, the official Xinhua News Agency reported yesterday. — AP.

Yemen attack

A suspected Islamic extremist shot dead three Roman Catholic nuns in Yemen yesterday, a Yemeni official said. The nuns — two of whom were from India and one from the Philippines — were killed on their way from their home to work, an organisation linked to a charity formerly run by Mother Teresa. — Reuters.

Porn scandal deepens

A Dutch child pornography scandal widened with revelations that a justice ministry employee was fired for selling Internet images, including some of children being sexually abused.

The civil servant used his computer to download images, including some of children as young as one being raped, De Telegraaf reported. — AP.

British aid

Britain is sending military observers to Georgia and Sierra Leone in a move reflecting a commitment to earmark more forces for United Nations operations, the Ministry of Defence said yesterday, Richard Norton-Taylor writes. Five service-

ism does not spill north into the former Soviet republics, while Iran's ruling Shiite Muslims see the Taliban Sunni Muslims as rivals.

"The Russians and the Iranians are very concerned by the possibility of victory by the Taliban," a US state department official said.

Russia and Iran would like to influence how the oil and gas riches of the Caspian Sea region are exploited. US officials believe Russia has decided it must curb the influence of Washington and US oil companies. — New York Times.

relationship with Iran, partly because of their overlapping oil interests in Central Asia, US officials say. Support for the Afghan rebels serves Iranian and Russian economic and political interests. The Northern Alliance acts as a buffer between the Taliban and the Afghan border with the former Soviet republics, while the continuation of civil war prevents Western oil companies from building pipelines across Afghan territory.

Both Russia and Iran fear any spread of Taliban radicalism. Moscow wants to ensure that Islamic extremism

in this confrontation are Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, which back the Taliban.

As the Russians move back into Afghanistan, Washington's role in the country seems to be diminishing. It is only a marginal player, overshadowed by the more direct involvement of US oil companies, say foreign experts.

Russia has decided to develop a broad, strategic



Benazir Bhutto arrives yesterday at the Lahore high court, which postponed the corruption case against her

Fresh delay in Bhutto trials

Owen Bennett Jones in Lahore

PAKISTAN'S government yesterday failed to have the Lahore high court frame formal corruption charges against the former prime minister Benazir Bhutto. But although the case was postponed until August 20, her lawyers privately concede that a full trial is inevitable.

Government officials are frustrated by the latest delay but say the legal net is tightening around Ms Bhutto and her husband, Asif Zardari.

Porn scandal deepens

A Dutch child pornography scandal widened with revelations that a justice ministry employee was fired for selling Internet images, including some of children being sexually abused.

British aid

Britain is sending military observers to Georgia and Sierra Leone in a move reflecting a commitment to earmark more forces for United Nations operations, the Ministry of Defence said yesterday, Richard Norton-Taylor writes. Five service-

Pisa plans

A Chinese engineer who has strengthened 60 slanted structures in China says his patented technique should be able to right the famed leaning tower of Pisa in Italy, the official Xinhua News Agency reported yesterday. — AP.

Yemen attack

A suspected Islamic extremist shot dead three Roman Catholic nuns in Yemen yesterday, a Yemeni official said. The nuns — two of whom were from India and one from the Philippines — were killed on their way from their home to work, an organisation linked to a charity formerly run by Mother Teresa. — Reuters.

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Ahmed Shah Massoud: Backed by former enemy Moscow

Comment

Diary

Matthew Norman

The Diary, as regular readers will know, yields to no one in its admiration for versatility in the workplace (Fatty "Nicholas" Soames is often landed, you will recall, for carving time from his schedule as a director of Wilton's restaurant to moonlight as a Tory MP), so it's a vibrant hat off today to Paul Twino. Mr Twino works in television — he was listed as a researcher on the Everyman programme about Louis Farrakhan broadcast on July 6 — but he also has another job: he is the director of Operation Farrakhan, a Manchester-based campaign to overturn the ban on the Nation of Islam leader entering Britain. Quite a coincidence. Last week, in his latter capacity, he sent Jack Straw a letter of staggering length suggesting that the exclusion order is the result of a conspiracy between "some and some Islamic puppets" and ending with the dread words: "I wish to forewarn you that if the exclusion order is not terminated, this nation will face demonstrations that will make the Drumcree bonnybrook look like a stroll in a park." We salute Everyman's dedication to employing independent-minded researchers, not to mention Mr Twino's tremendous industry.

I AM sorely tempted by an advert for Media on Trial: New Law and a New Direction for the 21st Century Media, a conference to be held at the Savoy on September 18. Topics such as "where is libel law going?" will be debated by speakers whom the ad describes as "leading lawyers and radical thinkers". Neatly falling into both categories is that widely respected libel expert, Mr Neil Hamilton.

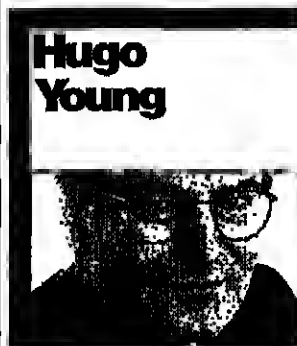
REPORTS that Mr Tony Blair found it emotionally tough to kick people out of his Cabinet are touching. The good news is that at least he managed to kick his Italian holiday host out of his own home without any of a struggle. The Sunday Telegraph reports that Prince Girolamo Strozzi, who invited the Blairs to stay at his estate when they felt unable to go to Geoffrey Robinson's villa, has been told to pack himself, his wife and children off the moment Mr Tony arrives, so that their guests have "total privacy". The Prince is reported not to be pleased. "It's all very awkward," he says. I should think he will think it is. Security is the official reason, and we are all at liberty to swallow that if we choose. It's certainly more palatable than believing Mr Tony to be capable of acting with such arrogant discourtesy. Dreadful show.

ALSO bolidaying in Italy (with Dolly Draper, according to a Sunday newspaper) is Oofy Wegg Prosser, who will, we hope and pray, be following Mandy Mandelson to the Realm of Trade. Meanwhile, it seems we have been the victims of a satirical spoof. The picture mentioned last week, which appears in Private Eye, was not of him at all, but of Macaulay Culkin. Not to worry, however, because at last, a real photo has been sent in, anonymously. It is from Oofy's recent days, and will feature here tomorrow.

ALARMED by a remark from Diary vicar Steve Chalkie on a Radio 4 arts show — worship, he said, is just like sex — we're for clarification. "What I was saying," says Rev Steve, "was in answer to the question 'Why doesn't worship work on TV?'. On TV, sex and worship are both just acting. You know the way sex appears on TV with all the honked bodies covered in baby oil? Well, worship should be made for a TV audience too." Ah, well that's nice and clear. Meanwhile, the Rev's media career proceeds smoothly. How many media appearances, we wonder, does he now make in a week? "I was on GMTV every day last week. This week, let's see, I've done BBC TV twice, Radio 4 one, two, three times, and Radio 5 Live as well. Listen, you will be careful not to suggest I said anything vulgar, won't you?" Of course we will. Goodbye, Rev Steve, and God bless.



Labour is at peace: the lion lies down with the lamb. For the time being



HUGO YOUNG

THE business of modern ministers, as Blairism defines their role, is not argument but primarily management. They must level the playing-field, identify the goals, square the posts, address the problems, task the departments, produce the results. Mr Blair's first reshuffle has about the same significance as re-ordering the management ladder at BT. The jostling aspirants will be judged by what they can deliver to the bottom line. Never in the past 50 years has that been the presiding narrative of cabinet performance in the way it is today.

Unlike previous eras, meaning those whose tone was set by Harold Wilson (1964-79) and Margaret Thatcher (1979-97), there was no deeper meaning behind the sight of the shuffling yesterday. His political content was zero. The length of the prelude, going back to before Easter, ensured ceaseless speculation, but the near-hysterical excitement this generated was misleading. As between the first Blair cabinet and the second, there's no significant difference. Instead of grand manoeuvres between factions, or telling triumphs for a left agenda against the right, or vice versa, the Prime Minister simply hopes he has produced a line-up of executives with neater suits, sharper minds, unabrasive manners and forgettable opinions about anything in particular.

In this he has succeeded. The shift of style has been towards deepening the submergence into the centre. While a progressive individualist like Frank Field is squeezed out of government, an old sweat like Jack Cunningham completes his transition from old to new Labour. Frank Dobson, originally cited as strictly

a one-year man, Blair's obedience to what the shadow cabinet elections threw up, is now judged, without gross offence to the truth, as a success. Encompassing Gordon Brown's spending review, the events of July 1998 can be marked down as refining the managerial project in a way that attracts virtually no disapproval, left to right, old to new, in Tony Blair's party: an important thing to say, but one that emphasises how much of the politics has been taken out of politics.

As proxy for the pre-managerial style — left/right, wet/dry etc. — Blair/Brown wheeled into valiant service. The old paradigm requires politicians to be divided into camps, and when ideas have drained away, then personal allegiance is asked to do the trick. Given the power-hunger of Mr Brown, and his servants' lust for battle, such an analysis generates its own political momentum. But it's hopelessly flawed. It assumes that Blair's position is in some way capable of being threatened — a quite fanciful notion. If you want a current paradigm event that depicts the Blair priorities, look no further than the blueprint of the cabinet secretary, Sir Richard Wilson, for reorganising the centre of government. Wilson the progress-chaser and Cunningham the reformer become the icons within this managerial Prime Minister is beginning to exalt.

The project, therefore, will carry on, mildly advanced by the removal of Gavin Strang, predictably blurred by the sacking of David Clark and his unmanagerial approach to take over Northern Ireland. Thus all the Orange Order's inherent bigotry has been brought to the surface.

Even for outsiders, July 10 was a stressful day. Whenever one went, people were fearful. In Portadown, local RUC families knew they had become hated targets. Shopkeepers feared being again forced to close by gangs of powerful Loyalists. Bus-drivers feared to take their vehicles anywhere. On the Garvaghy estate, scepticism persisted about the British renouncing its role.

ist attacks seemed inevitable. In Drumcree, intimidated Church of Ireland authorities were passively co-operating with rabble-rousers and thugs, allowing them to use church-owned buildings and fields. Ten Catholic churches had recently been fire-bombed. Were co-operation refused, Drumcree's Protestant church might share that fate. After another long-drawn-out nocturnal confrontation, the atmosphere on the Hill changed. Next morning few Orangemen were visible. At 8.30 half-drunk gangs, their faces concealed by scarves, swaggered around obscenely abusing their enemies; Trimble, Mowlam, Blair, Flanagan, Eames — could get her into serious (possibly terminal) trouble. Drumcree 4 presented to the world two sets of stereotypes. Down on the ground it felt different.

Many Orangemen directed the quintessence of their bigotry towards their Catholic beside their car. They looked uneasy. As we talked, I realised that they were frightened of their Loyalist followers, rashly summoned to support them without thought for the consequences of arousing paramilitary killers and teenage hoodlums who hate Catholics/Nationalists with a murderous passion.

One man warned me, "Don't let them hear you talk." "Them" being the scarved youths. He needn't have worried. I, too, was scared. That was another of Northern Ireland's quirks: an Orangeman concerned about the safety of a southern Irish woman whose accent, in Drumcree on July 11, 1998, could get her into serious (possibly terminal) trouble. Drumcree 4 presented to the world two sets of stereotypes. Down on the ground it felt different.

Gordon's amnesia



PAUL FOOT

GAVYN DAVIES is a millionaire and a close friend and adviser to the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, so he can see at once what is wrong with the country. There are not enough people out of work.

In a report published at the weekend, Gavyn and two of his colleagues demand a "sharp downturn for the economy" and lots more unemployment. They base their argument on something called *Niru: Non-Accelerating Inflation Rate of Unemployment*. Here is what it means. An irritating habit of people in work is to gang together to seek a higher standard of living. If there are lots of people on the dole, employers reply: "More wages? Don't be absurd. There are lots of people out there who have no job at all. If you don't shut up, we'll replace you with someone more respectful."

When there are very few out of work — the bad old pre-missive days of full employment in the 1950s and 1960s, for instance — workers are not impressed with this approach. Their trade unions get bigger and stronger. They start to win higher wages. The employers promptly put up their prices, and bingo, here comes the inflation which everyone dreads.

To avoid inflation, therefore, brilliant investment bankers like Gavyn Davies work out *Niru*: that is, the rate of unemployment necessary to ensure that inflation doesn't accelerate. After much thought, Gavyn has come up with a suitable unemployment figure for Britain in 1998: seven per cent — that is 2,000,000 out of work, about 600,000 or so more than now.

Are there words to explain or describe such preposterous double standards? Here are some which come close: "barren, myopic, almost suffocating consensus which has tended to ignore our real problems: our unstable economy and unacceptable level of unemployment, chronic inequalities of wealth and power and inadequate social services."

They come from the introduction to the *Red Paper for Scotland*, 1975, author — Gordon Brown.

Do you agree with any of that? Perhaps not. But do you think I (or Gordon Brown) should be thrown into prison for writing it? If not, you find yourself in sharp disagreement with Kim Dae Jung, President of South Korea. Kim is a former dissident who was often locked up for his opposition to the government. He is now busily locking people up for, er, opposition to the government.

In May he authorised his riot police to raid, arrest and imprison without trial 25 members of the tiny socialist group ISSK. The charges have nothing to do with violence or terrorism. They refer exclusively to opinions. One interesting charge accuses one of the 25 of singing the International — in public too. On a recent trip to the US to beg for more investment, Kim repeated his boast that capitalism in South Korea could not survive without democracy.

Challenged about the imprisonment of the socialists, he regretted that he could not punish people for what was in their heads, but explained that the ISSK members had had the gall to say out loud what they thought. If they wanted their freedom, the democratic president concluded, they must repudiate their views and stop denouncing the government.

I WAS AMUSED by the revelations last week that the Metropolitan Police Commissioner is planning a purge of some 200 corrupt police officers, some of whose evidence had led to miscarriages of justice. The last decade has been marked by a steady stream of hideous judicial miscarriages. None of the police officers responsible for any of them has been punished. In the old days, officers would be charged and acquitted. The more modern approach, favoured by the Director of Public Prosecutions is not to bother with charges. A year ago this week the four men convicted in 1978 of killing the newspaper boy Carl Bridgewater were cleared by the Court of Appeal. Their convictions were quashed after incontrovertible evidence by police officers. The papers went to the DPP, and nothing more has been heard since.

My experiences at Drumcree have left me optimistic about Ireland's chances for peace

Mortal blow to bigotry

Dervla Murphy

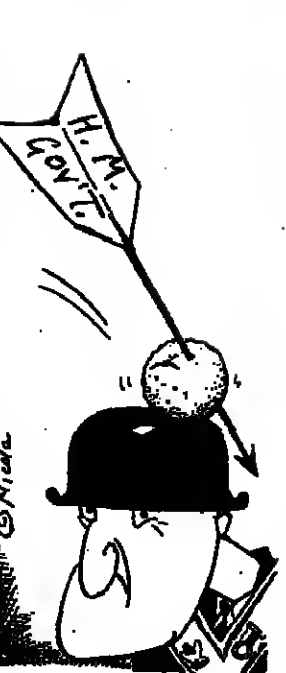
DUMCREE might be history but its importance should not be underestimated. It was a crucial rite of passage into the new phase of Anglo-Irish relations. In a small Portadown pub, I listened to a dozen young men, all Unionists, arguing vigorously. Some believed the Orangemen should have "come back the way they went", avoiding the Garvaghy Road. Their daring to say so alone, in the middle of the stand-off, was astonishing. Later, on the Garvaghy estate, 19 of the 27 residents to whom I spoke believed it would have been politically more astute, this year, to "let them through, ignore them — they don't matter any more, not since Good Friday". The Garvaghy residents were no more uniform in their attitudes than the Unionists in the pub. By the night of July 9/10, all

those on the Hill of Drumcree were psychologically (and at intervals physically) in a mini-war-zone. (Though no war-zone feels "mini" when you're in it.) I took refuge under a hedge, 50 yards from the front line, and wished I'd come home to bed. Then suddenly I was overwhelmed by the huge, long-term significance of a very unpleasant scene. This was not a scaled-up repeat performance of Drumcree 1, 2 and 3. It had become the tempering fire through which the Good Friday Agreement must pass to prove its steel. The agreement was being taken seriously. Attitudes really were shifting. Things could never be the same again.

Early next morning, after a brief sleep, I was back on the hill talking to a cross-section of Orangemen. They quoted lavishly from Mr Paisley's most recent diatribe. They repeatedly asserted that the "Yes" majority had voted for

peace, not for power-sharing with Fenians. (In Orange-speak, peace means "Cruppers lie down") They were bewildered and hurt, feeling betrayed by Britain, by a Government that had deployed the RUC and British troops against their "culture". Agitators intent on sabotaging the Agreement had persuaded them it was a Fenian plot to take over Northern Ireland. Thus all the Orange Order's inherent bigotry had been brought to the surface.

Even for outsiders, July 10 was a stressful day. Whenever one went, people were fearful. In Portadown, local RUC families knew they had become hated targets. Shopkeepers feared being again forced to close by gangs of powerful Loyalists. Bus-drivers feared to take their vehicles anywhere. On the Garvaghy estate, scepticism persisted about the British renouncing its role.



fellow-citizens, an amazing number holiday in the Papist republic.

As the Orange-fuelled violence spread far beyond Drumcree, a conviction that it must lead to killing was general. Would the casualties be RUC officers, or British soldiers, or political leaders, or hijacked bus passengers, or Loyalist paramilitaries? No one could foresee the murders of three small boys. It is possible — probably, say some — that the shock-therapy administered to the Orangemen by these murders saved the lives of many others.

Few Northern Irish have remained untouched by the violence and tension of the past 30 years: many have suffered deeply. The present yearning for peace is a powerful reality, a dynamo for change.

Dervla Murphy's latest book, *South From The Limpopo (Flamingo)*, is out in the autumn.

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Brown loses, Blair gains

Welfare reform is at risk

THE TRADITIONAL ritual of post-reshuffle analysis dwells, inevitably, on winners and losers. The first wave of winners is obvious — Jack Cunningham, Alistair Darling, Stephen Byers, Margaret Jay. So are the immediate losers — Harriet Harman, David Clark, Gavin Strang, Ivor Richard and, albeit by his own hand, Frank Field. But there are some deeper victories and defeats, hidden in the lists of who's in and who's out.

Tony Blair is the clearest winner of all, succeeding in the primary goal of any prime minister: re-asserting his ministerial pack for the first time — namely, imposing his own stamp on his cabinet. By the same token, Gordon Brown has lost out quite badly — watching as key allies have been removed and unfriendly newcomers moved in. But the Government itself could also suffer: its election-winning commitment to "reform welfare as we know it" has suffered a substantial blow.

Mr Blair has moved to make the Government his own. Perhaps alarmed by the degree of control exercised by his chancellor, he wants a tighter grip. The creation of the new "enforcer" role is aimed at precisely this objective, bolstering the power of the prime minister and ensuring his will is done throughout Whitehall. The choice of Jack Cunningham is very canny. He has picked a man who was tipped — perhaps with insider blessing — for the chop a matter of weeks ago. His cause was championed neither by the farmers he had worked

with at Agriculture, nor by Labour backbenchers, nor by the Brownites and certainly not by the media. In other words, Dr Cunningham owes his elevation — and his salvation from political oblivion — solely to Tony Blair. As such, he will have only one master: he can be relied upon to be absolutely loyal.

Mr Blair has reinforced his position yet further by three strikes against the Brown camp. He has shifted Nick Brown — so loyal to the Chancellor he even shares his name — out of the key Chief Whip's post to the less pivotal Agriculture department, so removing one of Gordon Brown's most valuable holds on the parliamentary party. By choosing the impeccably Blairite Stephen Byers, rather than the more ambidextrous Alan Milburn, as Chief Secretary to the Treasury, he has parachuted an ultra-loyalist into the Brownite citadel. The Chancellor will now be forgiven for seeing his official deputy as a virtual spy for the next-door neighbour. Finally, the rewarding of Peter Mandelson with a ministry of his own at Trade and Industry represents a mixed blessing for Mr Brown. On the one hand, he is doubtless relieved that the formerly portfolio-deprived one — with whom relations are arctic — is not in the "enforcer" job, with a licence to poke his nose into the inter-departmental business Mr Brown regards as his own. Still, Gordon Brown cannot be overjoyed that his rival is heading an economics department. Along with the Byers appointment, it means the Chancellor no longer has the economic show all to himself.

The one sour note from Mr Blair's point of view was yesterday's walkout by Frank Field. Disappointed not to take over as social security supremo, nor to win any other cabinet post, the former minister for unthinkable thoughts chose the back-

benches. His departure will send a message to the right-leaning press whose support this government covets so badly. They admired Mr Field and will interpret his exit as a sign that New Labour is no longer committed to taking the axe to welfare spending — once seen as the defining mission of this administration. With a firmer hold on his own cabinet, Mr Blair will now have to prove that the mission goes on — even if the crew has changed.

Protecting rights

Labour shouldn't be apologetic

BRITAIN used to boast, somewhat exaggeratedly, of a proud tradition of providing a sanctuary for those fleeing from persecution: from Huguenots in the 17th century to Jews in the 20th century. Not only are we no longer proud to offer such sanctuary, but within the last decade our procedures have been described by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees as the worst in Europe. Labour in opposition deserved credit for refusing to descend to the depths to which Michael Howard sank in playing the race card with his 1996 Asylum and Immigration Act — just three years after a 1993 Act had already shut most doors and turned thousands of international airline staff into immigration officers through the introduction of fines on carriers for every person brought here without proper papers. New Labour was right to review the entire procedure — a review which yesterday produced important improvements. The trouble is ministers were far too apologetic. There are advances on three important fronts. First, tens of thousands of applicants, left in limbo for years, are likely to have their residential status secured. Ministers

shied away from calling this an amnesty but that is what the new procedure essentially is. New criteria, under which the unacceptable delay will be taken into account, will apply to 10,000 pre-1993 applicants and another 20,000 pre-1995. Quite right too. No-one — not even Michael Howard — had moved to send these poor people away. Indeed, they had been deliberately left on the shelf in a bid to concentrate on new applicants. Second, due process is belatedly being introduced into the detention and vetting procedures, including statutory rules, written reasons for detention, and automatic bail hearings within seven days. Third, the notorious "white list" of countries, from which all applicants are presumed to be bogus, will be abolished. What's wrong is the new system of financial support, which although put on a national basis, will be in kind rather than in cash. This might just be permissible should delays be cut to two months but reality suggests this will not be achieved. Seeking vouchers for everything — from food to sanitary needs — for 12 months or more is unacceptably demeaning. What was also wrong yesterday was the reform-by-stealth under the cover of the reshuffle. Unless ministers win the arguments, they will come back to haunt them. Let them go out and persuade the people. Instead of being apologetic, they should be proud to be protecting human rights.

Sandline's moral

It's time now for reform at the FO

ROBIN COOK had no trouble at all in brushing off Michael Howard's attack when the Legg report on "arms to Africa" was published yesterday. The shadow foreign secretary's clunking start on the "dire state

of affairs in one of our great departments of state" quickly descended to the personal level and stayed there. He blamed Mr Cook exclusively for the "management and cultural factors" which the report identifies as the main cause of what went wrong in the FO — as if that body could ever have been transformed by Labour masters in just over a year. The truth is closer to the reverse: this is an organisation which remains slow to change, and the Sandline affair has exposed serious deficiencies, some of which can fairly be blamed upon its laid-back culture. It is just as well that the trigger for reform has been an affair with relatively minor diplomatic consequences.

The closest that the report comes to suggesting that ministers should have tackled the issue earlier is when it describes documents seen by Minister of State Tony Lloyd in mid-April as containing "enough information to make it clear that the allegations were sensitive and potentially troublesome". But it goes on to say (Mr Howard omitted this part) that the documents were misleading. Whether ministers should maintain a higher degree of scrutiny is a fair question. Ideally the answer must be yes — and not just for Sierra Leone. The big issues on which Mr Cook prefers to focus must be buttressed by detail. But getting the balance can be difficult.

Mr Cook now has an unexpected chance to push through some real reforms in the FO — though he may not find it easy to temper his energy with tact. There is a lesson to be drawn too about under-funding of the FO — an aspect which the Legg report has overlooked. Legg also calls for better guidance on "relations with private military companies" like Sandline. It would be more pertinent to ask whether such companies have any place in a Britain which values its role as UN peacekeeper.

Letters to the Editor

Beatles, bigots and bi-planes

PAUL McCartney's childhood home may be "non-descript" but, contrary to what Lionel Birch (Letters, July 24) says, such homes reflect our social and cultural history, as much as the abodes owned by the National Trust. But if Mr Birch questions whether the celebrity of a former occupier is a good enough reason to preserve and exhibit, he must also ask to anyone who lives in London whether Churchill's Chartwell and the considerably bumber homes of Ellen Terry and Samuel Coleridge Taylor, among many others, ought to be in the Trust's care. Terry Philipps. Oxford, Surrey.

YOUR article on the hugely disproportionate attention paid by the police to people from ethnic minorities (Police stop blacks eight times more than whites, July 27) must come as no surprise to anyone who lives in London. Passing through the "anti-terrorist" Ring of Steel into the City of London daily during the mid-Nineties, I was forced to conclude that the Met had secret information on a link between the IRA and the Black Panthers, so monotonously did the occupants of any stopped vehicle turn out to be black. Dil Green. London.

RICHARD Holloway (Face to Faith, July 25) is wrong to suggest that intolerance is always found in "sects" and not "parent" churches. The pre-Reformation Church in the West persecuted all groups deviating from orthodox belief. The Quaker "sect" in England likewise met with persecution from the Established Church, while itself championing religious freedom. Rev Hedley Cousins. Lancaster.

JANE Reed of News International accuses British "hackers" of "grubby little motives", distortion and trivia in their reporting of Brown and Murdoch in Idaho. Can't think where they learnt it. James Thomas. Swansea.

IN YOUR People Watch section (The Editor, July 26): "Anthea Turner swears on anti-wrinkle cream, eye contour cream, Elizabeth Arden Eight Hour Cream and acupuncture sessions at the Harbour Club. She believes that if you're healthy within, it shows on your skin." Whereas if you're Anthea Turner, you need to give your skin a little extra help? Jon Kenyard. Barking.

WAS intrigued to see that your front page (July 27) described the historic Blériot aircraft as a bi-plane. It's a monoplane (or was until its untimely dunking — now it's probably a dead plane). Perhaps you would like me to explain the meaning of the word bi-sexual as well? Mike Woolf. London.

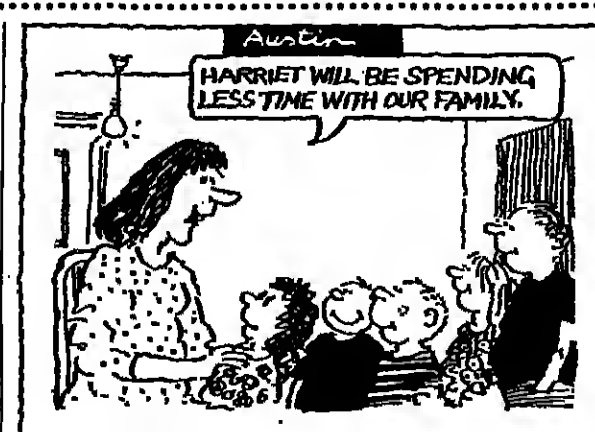
Our prayers for Lambeth

THE claim that US fundamentalist funding is buying the voices of the African Bishops (Ambash, July 24) is outrageous. I work for the Tanzanian church, which regards homosexuality as a sin against God — as the Bible says it is. They believe this absolutely and are not being bought by American money. The fact is that the shrinking US church is grossly over-represented, with 200 bishops present at the Lambeth conference for 2.5 million Christians. In contrast, Uganda with 8 million Anglicans has less than 30 bishops.

The rapidly growing southern churches are desperately seeking to make sure that their prophetic challenge to the Western church is not ignored. Their message is simple: a church which is not based on scripture is destined to die. If the Church wishes to be relevant to society today, it must continue to remain faithful to the bible and to God. Andrew Maclean. Diocese of Mara, Tanzania.

IT SEEMS that the arrogance of the World Bank is undiminished (Bank chief and bishops clash, July 25). In the face of worldwide protest against the bank's loan conditions, the president, James Wolfensohn, claims that the bank is "doing many of the things the Church wishes to do". The Christian Church has not, to my knowledge, any desire to create credit, act as part of the global money supply and bankrupt the develop-

ing nations into un-repayable debt. Nor has the Church any desire to exert control over developing nations, obliging them to conform to the West's narrow notion of "sound economics". This disgraceful comment by Wolfensohn ranks alongside those by Lawrence Summers, his predecessor, who dismissed objections by the Indian government to the bank's economic programme with the comment: "There is no longer such a thing as specifically Indian economics." Then there was the infamous memo describing the use of World Bank aid to shift the polluting industries of the wealthy nations, as "impeccable logic". Michael Rowbottom. Secretary, Christian Council for Monetary Justice.



Time to be brave about sex

WHEN I was 16, I couldn't find an older lesbian to "show me the ropes", but there were plenty of middle-aged (often married) heterosexual men willing to do so. It took me 20 years, two children and a broken marriage before I managed to find my true (lesbian) love. Why condemn young people to this painful process? Lou Manby. Norfolk.

WHILE I have every sympathy with those seeking to equalise the age of consent for gay sex, it seems that an important point has been missed by members of the House of Lords. Why cannot my daughter be protected by law from predatory older men enticing her into sexual liaisons at 16, while my son must be sure to let this blatant sexual discrimination that needs challenging. Phyllis Baker. Peterborough, Cambridgeshire.

That Stephen Bayley should take a hike

WHAT a relief to see the great intellectual brains of Stephen Bayley applied to the vexed subject of the tyranny of the private car (Let's hear it for the car, July 27). Would this by any chance be the same Stephen Bayley who departed the Dome design team last year? If so, one can only be grateful that he disdains public transport. Buses may be rooky, but could still struggle with that ego. Lynne Curry. Clevedon, Somerset.

YOU really must let your writers out into the real world sometimes. I was enjoying Stephen Bayley's piece until I read his assertion that "a decent shirt nowadays costs more than £100". If Mr Bayley could be persuaded to try one of those buses, full of "people you want to get away from", he will meet many people wearing perfectly adequate shirts costing well under £100. Peter Bates. West Kirby, Wirral.

AY WAS most amused to read Stephen Bayley's ebulliently pointless rendition of John Prescott's terribly funny Newham speech. Perhaps awl contributors could be encouraged to submit their cawpy in their own vernacular idiom — and, heaving hard Mr Bayley's toffee-nosed drawl, his future contributions are bound to be a giggle. Tim Footman. Wallington, Surrey.

PLEASE let me out of my misery. I've been telling friends that the Wheels section is a wind-up. Any moment now, I've said, it's going to break out into balanced and original coverage of transport issues. Then we get a pro-car essay from Stephen Bayley. Maybe some original analysis and section is too much to ask for. Paul Docherty. York.

Good riddance to community care

YOUR article (£1bn to end care in the community, July 25) referred to the poor communication among care professionals. I had good reason to agree with this recently. One of my neighbours had been exhibiting signs of severe mental distress. I called the emergency social services team: the duty social worker, who appeared to resent being disturbed on a Saturday, told me that I should call the police, who would, he explained, "cart him straight off" to hospital. I did so and was told that they would investigate. I waited for two hours before calling again. This time the police told me that the person in question was known to them but they had no powers to act unless he was behaving dangerously. That this took place in Islington, a borough which has already seen two high-profile homicides by patients in the community, seems unsurprising. The problem lies not so much with a lack of care in the community as with a lack of community in the care. Clare Allan. London.

Rabbit run

THE SUSSEX Wildlife Trust's reserves manager, Bill Jenman, says there are "legitimate animal welfare grounds" for the gassing of thousands of rabbits (Furor over rabbit gassing to save downs, July 25). He asserts that "sooner or later they will die anyway, either by starvation or disease". Rabbits can reach population densities which man might find a nuisance, but this does not result in rabbits starving to death or in "disastrous" deaths. Rabbits avoid both by controlling their own population densities through the resorption of embryos. The only disease which has ever spread "like wildfire" through rabbits is myxomatosis, which was deliberately and wickedly introduced into the UK in the 1950s. It killed more than 99 per cent of our 100 million rabbits. The habitat which suffered most was Britain's chalk downlands. Without rabbits' grazing, the grass grew and choked out many rare plants and much downland reverted to scrub. Without rabbits, Mr Jenman probably wouldn't have any Sussex downlands to worry about. John Bryant. London.

The downer

NOWHERE did David Ward (Think you're depressed? You're not alone, July 25) mention that tricyclics are considerably more toxic when taken as an overdose. Given that the principal risk in severe depression is suicide, one should consider the cost of a life when considering the cost of a tablet. Another cost/benefit analysis relates to the different side-effects — some more tolerable to patients than others — of tricyclics and SSRIs. Dr N von Fraunhofer. Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, London.

Public transport: some pointers for Prescott

MY WORK involves a great deal of travel and, although a journey to Birmingham or Bristol costs more and takes maybe an hour longer than in the car, I justify the extra time and expense of taking the train in terms of being able to read and work and arriving refreshed. But for the fourth time in four days, I am late. Five out of nine journeys have been delayed by equipment failure. No amount of colourful liveries, onboard refreshment or apologetic announcements can make up for the lost time. If I got five things out of nine wrong in my job, I would quite rightly be dismissed. If John Prescott really wants to get

people out of their cars and on to public transport, he must do whatever is necessary to provide a service which, above all else, is reliable. Richard J Griffiths. Maidstone, Kent.

I CAN make the journey between London and the Kent coast by car in about one and a half hours at a cost of £10 for petrol (regardless of how many people are in the car). By train, the journey takes at least three hours. If I also use the tube or buses in London, Put another way, two or three people can get from Kent to London in a car for £10 but to go by train takes twice as long and costs

six times as much. Until some-one comes up with the balance, the car will remain the more attractive option. Something should be done about the national disgrace that is a rail system in which a train takes two hours to go 80 miles. Even the Victorians did better than that. John Robinson. London.

IN any way associated with the Great Western Railway which was God's Wonderful Railway and, having ceased to exist at the time of nationalisation, has gone with Regret. I. A. Summers. Paddock Wood, Kent.

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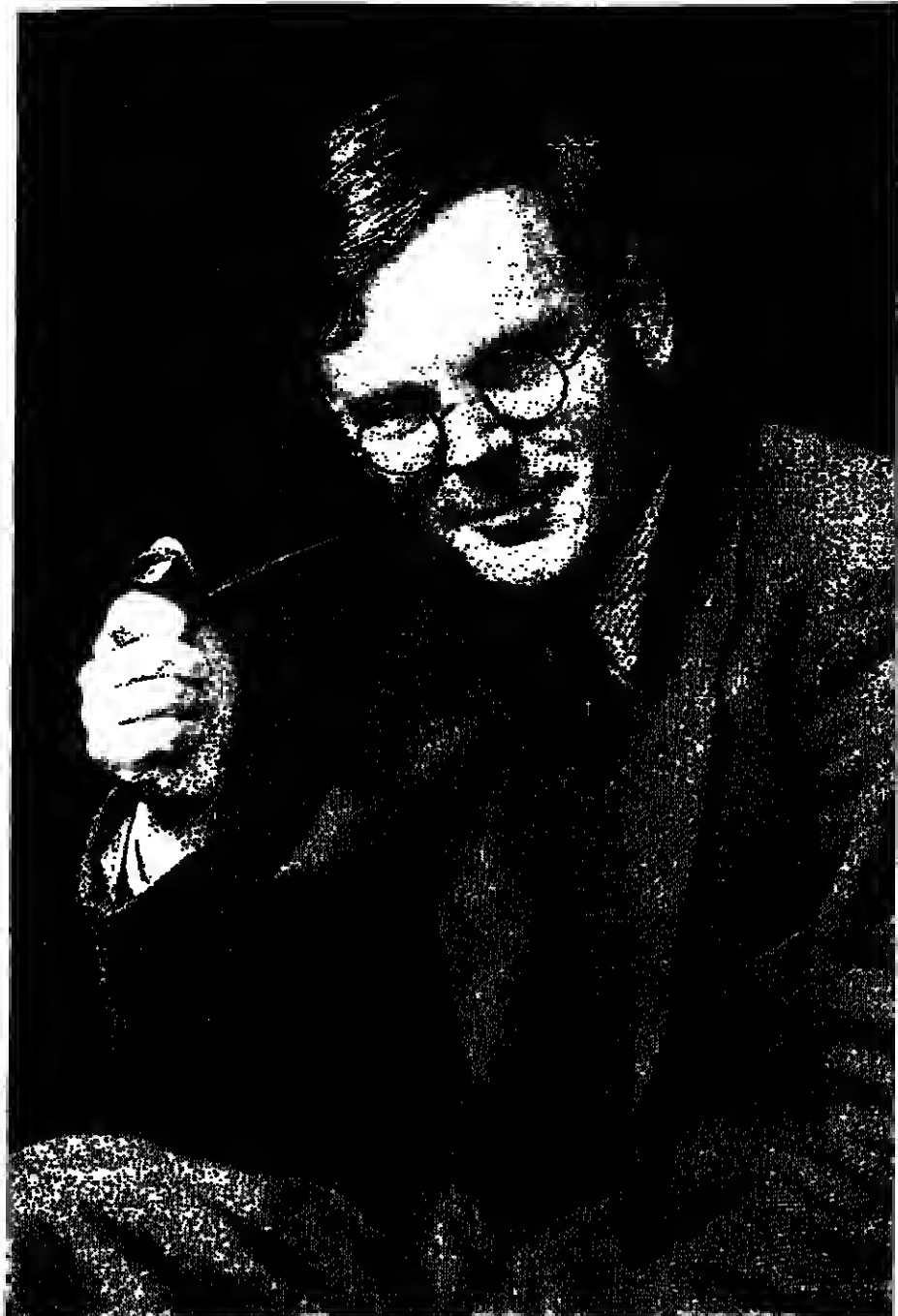


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Gordon... by the 1950s he was ranked as a 'scientist of individual merit' at Farnborough

James Gordon

A material world

IN THE last 50 years, the gulf between chemistry and structural mechanics has been bridged by a new discipline, materials science, which, with molecular biology, has gone far to unify our vision of the world about us. Professor James Gordon, who has died aged 84, played a leading role in this science at every level. Identifying fundamental problems and basic theories, applying the theories in the invention of new materials and in the explanation of biological structures, and inspiring colleagues and students in many countries through writings which are also classics of *household name*.

Radical innovation, especially in a field involving expensive investment, is not for the faint-hearted or the insecure, but Gordon was a non-conformist both by descent and temperament, physically as well as intellectually adventurous, and generous almost to a fault.

After schooling at Glenamond and holidays spent ranging the fells around Kendal and the small ports of northern Italy, he took a degree in naval architecture at Glasgow University and an apprenticeship in wooden and metal shipyards, with the intention of designing sailing boats. On the outbreak of the second world war he joined the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough to work on wooden aircraft, plastics, and other non-metallic materials. He also designed the rubber dinghy carried by bombers, and tested it himself at sea.

By the 1950s Gordon ranked as a "scientist of individual merit" at Farnborough, and was in charge of the plastics division, already working on fibre-reinforcement, and already meeting resistance from traditionalists. One application of reinforced plastic was a complete wing for a projected unmanned bomber.

Though it met the specifications for its metal equivalent, and was very much cheaper to produce, approval for test flights was not given.

In 1954 Gordon moved to Tube Investments (TI), a new research department at Hinxton, set up by Philip Bowden (who was said to be the inspiration for Francis Gellie in C. P. Snow's novels). Gordon had earlier co-operated with Bowden to develop the first plastic non-friction surfaces for skis, which again he tested himself.

For several years a liberal attitude to research enabled a talented team drawn from many disciplines to make rapid progress on the problems of making composites of brittle materials, which should be both strong and tough. However, by the

Gordon was a non-conformist both by descent and temperament

middle 1960s, rationalisation at TI forced another team to be formed, and Gordon migrated with his team to the Explosives Research and Development Establishment at Waltham Abbey. Attention was now concentrated on producing very strong fibres, by growing "whiskers" of silicon carbide. Sadly, their growth proved insufficiently regular to be commercially viable. However, an alternative tactic, on which Gordon advised colleagues at Farnborough, resulted there in the development of carbon fibre, with far-reaching consequences for British industry. In 1968, Gordon moved to a chair at Reading University, from which he further expanded the frontiers of engineering. He built up the study of biological materials and

structures, with applications in biology, medicine, and a new speciality, biomimetics — the imitation of natural structures to achieve special properties, such as the toughness of wood. In conjunction with the professor of classics, the late A. W. H. Adkins, he stimulated contacts between engineers and classicists. Both initiatives survive: currently three archaeo-metallogrists are working on ancient armour, and the Centre for Biomimetics has 12 members.

Also, in 1968, Gordon published his first ground-breaking book, *The New Science of Strong Materials*. Addressed to the general reader in a personal and discursive style of deceptive simplicity and humour, the book delves deeply enough into its subject to serve as an Open University text-book. It has been set for both O-level English literature and A-level physics, and has been translated into more than 20 languages. A sequel, *Structures* (1977), analyses the behaviour of machines, buildings, furniture, textiles, animal bodies, and plants, with a truly Blakean unity of vision, both moral and aesthetic.

Both books have been an inspiration to a generation of engineers. Both demonstrate the value of integrating the scientific and literary cultures, and of incorporating applied studies, such as engineering, into general education. They may well be Gordon's most enduring legacy.

Gordon's wide range of interests, his voracious reading, his wit and immense kindness, made him a fascinating companion. His life was shared for 59 years with his wife, Theo, who survives him, together with their son, John, and four grandchildren.

Henry Blyth

James Edward Gordon, scientist and engineer, born August 9, 1913; died June 26, 1998

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

LOUIS Blériot's failed attempt to recreate his grandfather's flight across the English Channel (page 1, yesterday) was made in a monoplane, with one set of wings, not a biplane, as we reported.

THE wrong telephone area code was given for Deltalight (UK) in the sourcebook feature in our Space supplement

(page 16, July 24). The correct number is 01426 631919. The company does not have local agents.

WE mixed up Aristarchus and Eratosthenes in a feature about the archaeology of Alexandria (Guardian Higher Education, page 14, July 14). It was Aristarchus of Samos who proposed that the Earth went round the Sun, and Eratosthenes who calculated the roundness of the Earth.

It is the policy of the Guardian to correct errors as soon as possible. Please quote date and page number. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor by telephoning 0171 239 5859 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Letters to Readers' Editor, The Guardian, 119, Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER. Fax: 0171 239 5997. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk

Letter

Edward Pearce writes: George Lloyd (Obituary, July 8) enjoyed a brilliant Indian summer with many recordings of his symphonic and choral works. But this was due to American patrons at the University of Albany and the Lyrita record company, also the general music-loving public. To the prime outlet for classical music in Britain, Radio 3, he owed nothing.

For 30 years this mild, immensely nice man, was one of

the many victims of a privileged, uncatholic BBC denial of access, effectively suppressing all contemporary music which followed the norms of harmony and melodic line. Many more were virtually silenced by "central command" aesthetics. It was in despair at such attitudes that Robert Simpson, probably the most inspirational programme director the BBC ever had, resigned. George Lloyd told me that the BBC's

head of music in Manchester had related to him his instructions to return unopened any envelope with George's Dorset postmark.

I have written to Nicholas Kenyon, controller of Radio 3, who is not culpable for past attitudes, with a proposal. We are in another Proms season. It is not beyond the resource of musicians to find space for a performance of a representative work by Lloyd. After years of exclusion, an act of grace and good manners would be in order.

Henri Ziegler

In flight for France

ON August 23, 1944 the BBC announced the liberation of Paris. The announcer could hardly conceal his excitement as he spoke the words — Paris is free! The people of Paris, he said, had risen against the Germans, and after four days of struggle, the enemy had been defeated. The announcer cried: "Vive La France" and the *Marseillaise* was played.

Yet the news was not strictly true. It took a further two days, after heavy fighting, before the Germans surrendered on the afternoon of August 25. But neither was the news completely untrue. The liberation had begun on August 19, and Paris had been covered in barricades since August 21.

The authors of the original report, having skillfully avoided censorship control, knew what they were doing. They aimed to force the American commander of the 1st Army, General Bradley, to send General Leclerc's Free French armoured division into Paris to complete the liberation. The report's main author was "Colonel Vernon", the Resistance pseudonym of Henri Ziegler,

who has died aged 91, and who went on to play an important role in the story of Concorde, and become the man behind Airbus Industrie, the European consortium now challenging Boeing for global domination of the civilian aircraft market.

Ziegler was born in Limoges. He was educated at Paris's Collège Stanislas, the Ecole Polytechnique and the Ecole Nationale de l'Aéronautique. In 1928 he joined the air force, later becoming a test pilot, and in 1939 deputy director of the air force's test centre. In 1939 he headed the French air force's procurement mission in the United States.

Active in the Resistance, in May 1944 he became chief of staff of the Free French Forces of the Interior. The task which became most important after D-Day was to identify and supply the principal centres of resistance. Within four months some 9,000 containers of arms were parachuted to Resistance groups, together with soldiers to provide leadership and to train the new fighters. Ziegler ended the war as a general.

In 1948 he joined Air France as deputy general



manager, becoming its chairman in 1948. In 1954 he was persuaded by Jacques Chaban-Delmas, then public works minister in the government of Pierre Mendès France, to be his *directeur de cabinet*, and he continued in the job with a new minister after the resignation of Mendès France.

Ziegler played a key role in the story of Concorde and Airbus Industrie, the European consortium now challenging Boeing

haunting evening — to continue the process whereby France would develop its own nuclear weapons. From 1957 to 1967 Ziegler was managing director of the Louis Breguet aircraft group. In 1968 he became chairman of Sud Aviation, which had played a key role in the birth of the Anglo-French Concorde programme, and for three years after 1970 he headed the Aerospatiale group — and founded Airbus Industrie. The substantial British campaign against Concorde, primarily on grounds of cost, had its counterpart in France. Ziegler had to combat the highly respected Antoine Pinay and the lively Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, to get Con-

corde past its first test flights in March 1968.

As head of Sud Aviation Ziegler had to fight the same battles again when involved in the development of the first European Airbus programme, the A300 twin-engine widebody aircraft. The project had started to take shape during 1967. There was substantial British opposition, and the French government opposed its growing cost. Ziegler pointed out that an Airbus cancellation would leave 30,000 skilled workers jobless.

Ziegler became director-general of Airbus Industrie, which was created in 1970, and became a European consortium. When he retired in 1976, one wonders which of his achievements gave him most pleasure. He received numerous French and British honours, including the Croix de Guerre, the Légion d'Honneur and the CBE. He is survived by his wife, and their three sons and one daughter.

Douglas Johnson

Henri Ziegler, airman, Resistance fighter and businessman, born November 18, 1906; died July 23, 1998

Monica Dance

Using steel to save bricks

IN 1977, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), founded by William Morris, celebrated its centenary. In 1978 Monica Dance, who has died aged 84, retired after nearly 50 years working for the society, for the last 37 of which she had been its secretary. The two had become almost indivisible.

Monica Dance's instinctive approach to the task was that of the dressmaker, on the SPAB technical panel, a sub-committee in which the society's expertise was honed by some of the most experienced professionals in the field. She gained her support through personal relationships and cemented her efforts through a prodigious memory, for both people and buildings.

She had come from a large family and lived successfully in Barnsley and near Matlock. After grammar school, she took a job in 1931 as an office junior for the architects John Macgregor and A. R. Powys. Both men were stalwarts of the SPAB (Powys was its secretary) and she soon moved over to work for the organisation. In 1936 Powys died and Monica Dance shouldered the administrative duties of the society dealing with members, and those who, at the beginning, she found "very frightening, learned men". After a short

home after they left 55 Great Ormond Street, London, where they had lived "over the shop".

Her secret weapon was a particularly sweet, but steely, sense of humour. During the war period with an enormous volume of damaged and deteriorating buildings, Monica Dance galvanised volunteers for all kinds of tasks. Her address book was the engine of her fight. She set up, and acted as secretary to, the SPAB technical panel, a sub-committee in which the society's expertise was honed by some of the most experienced professionals in the field. She gained her support through personal relationships and cemented her efforts through a prodigious memory, for both people and buildings.

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Dance... direct action

break at the beginning of the war, she returned to the SPAB to become acting secretary, jointly with Macgregor. She was neither university educated nor professionally trained. Like many women of her generation, she slipped into place with a smattering of shorthand, gained expertise along the way and made the most of opportunities, particularly during the war years.

After the war Monica Dance was instrumental in setting up the Georgian Group, and the Victorian Society took shape from the germ of John Betjeman's enthusiasm for the plight of Victorian buildings. As a result of the society's work, many buildings were saved from demolition and led back to Monica Dance. With Macgregor, she

played a major part in setting up the National Monuments Record in 1947. New legislation and statutory powers accorded to the societies meant a much heavier workload in the latter years. Membership of the SPAB grew too, from a few hundred to several thousand.

In its centenary year, Sir Nikolaus Pevsner gave a lecture to the SPAB. He hesitated to clear his throat. Mrs Dance disappeared, to re-emerge on tip-toe bearing a glass of water. As she tip-toed off again, he broke into a broad smile. "She's wonderful, isn't she?" Betjeman wrote a sprightly ditty to mark her retirement.

In 1988, in recognition of her continuing passion for the education of young architects, surveyors and engineers in the care of old buildings, a scholarship was endowed by the SPAB scholars themselves and set up in her name. The Dance scholarship gave her the greatest of pleasures. Even in faltering health last year at the annual gathering of the Dance Scholarship Trust, she was, like a queen bee, at the very centre of her world.

Gillian Darley

Monica Dance, campaigner, born November 24, 1913; died July 21, 1998

Dennis Allen

The welfare of children

THE tragic death of a young child, Maria Coldwell, in 1973 projected East Sussex's then director of social services, Dennis Allen, into the national spotlight. The Coldwell case focussed media attention on the problem of parental abuse and led indirectly to the 1975 Children Act.

The inquiry into Coldwell's death blamed poor co-ordination of the caring services and lax practices among social workers and others. Allen shouldered the blame for the case, and it might have sunk the career of other, less skilled social workers. But through the media he raised awareness of the complexity and risks in child abuse casework.

Allen was determined that the tragedy of Maria Coldwell should lead to better procedures and training. As president of the Association of Directors of Social Services, he chased his colleagues and the Government to increase training opportunities and skill throughout the social work service.

Allen was a man of mild and sensitive demeanour,

who vigorously survived a disrupted childhood, much of which was spent in a Whitby boarding school. He joined the Society of Friends shortly before the second world war, and, as a pacifist, spent several terms in prison for his beliefs. Perhaps it was this experience that made him respect human dignity, and shaped a set of values which he impressed upon others.

After the war he worked in the youth service and, with his first wife, was employed by the Liverpool Association of Boys and Mixed Clubs. He then ran adventure and outdoor activities in Cheshire. The work was hard, the pay was bad, and it was not an easy time for the father of four daughters.

AFTER a period working in Peper Harrow Approved School, Allen formally qualified and rapidly rose through the childcare departments of the London, County Council, Hampshire, and Sussex, culminating in the East Sussex directorship. His own gentle and firm approach, respecting each per-

son's needs and abilities, encouraged others to use their skills. By the time he retired in 1980 his department was one of the most skilled and professional in the country, and he had attracted great affection and loyalty.

Allen was a passionate man — about his work, his hobbies and, postretirement, his voluntary activities. He chaired the British Agency for Adoption and Fostering and the British section of Save the Children, worked for Romanian orphans and visited prisoners.

The strength of his relationship with Marjorie, his second wife for 33 years, carried him through his career and supported him late in life through poor health. Legacy was absolute integrity, unshakable values, and commitment to the care of children. He is survived by Marjorie, four daughters and 15 grandchildren.

Brian Rycroft

Dennis Allen, social services director, born October 23, 1919; died June 5, 1998

Death Notices

POLYTON, Kate. Died on 23 July, she will be sadly missed by Son, David, and all her family and friends. Funeral on 28 July, 11.30am, from St. Peter's Church, London. Burial at Highgate Cemetery. Memorial to be arranged.

ROLAND, Gerald. On 23rd July, aged 85, he died peacefully at his home, surrounded by his family and friends. Funeral on 28 July, 11.30am, from St. Peter's Church, London. Burial at Highgate Cemetery. Memorial to be arranged.

TRAVENNA, On 23rd July, 1998, Margaret (Daisy) aged 84 years. Much loved mother of 4 sons and 2 daughters. Funeral on 28 July, 11.30am, from St. Peter's Church, London. Burial at Highgate Cemetery. Memorial to be arranged.

Anniversaries

MARNEY, Clara & John, congratulations to your 50th wedding anniversary. Have a great time in Paris. Love Molly and Tom.

online

Every Thursday in the

The Guardian

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The Guardian Tuesday July 28 1998

11

Analysis Spooks



The vital ingredient
8

Here's looking at you kid

The technology of spying on the ordinary citizen is running out of control of the law. And that's practically official.

Richard Norton-Taylor presents the findings of the report published today by a most respectable body

COVERT surveillance by the police and security services, including growing use of informers and the interception of personal communications, is running out of control, posing an unprecedented threat to individual privacy. The warning comes today not from a group of conspiracy theorists or a politically-motivated campaign rehabilitating old slogans. It is the conclusion of a sober report by Justice, the legal human rights organisation. Justice is the British section of the International Commission of Jurists and its chairman is Lord Alexander QC, chairman of the Natwest Bank who was ennobled by the Tory government.

The eyes and ears of an emerging Big Brother are being fed by developments in increasingly intrusive technology which have outstripped the law and whose significance law-makers have either failed, or not tried, to appreciate. This technology is being nourished on the one hand by emphasis on "proactive", intelligence-led policing, on the other by Whitehall's apparently uncritical enthusiasm for the potential benefits technology can bring to the innocent citizen. An obvious manifestation of the growth of new technology is the sheer volume of names held on computer data bases, not only by police forces but by MIS as well. Tomorrow Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, will announce new guidelines on the way MIS uses and preserves its files on individuals — estimated to total between 200,000 and 300,000. He is unlikely to propose new measures leading to greater transparency or accountability.

According to the Justice report, the national strategy for police information systems has enabled the Greater Manchester Police, for example, to put together 50 separate data bases containing about 10 million records. Hampshire police criminal intelligence data bases hold the names of 80,000 people out of a total population of 3 million.

The Police National Computer holds around 55 million records. The National Criminal Intelligence Service contains the names of about 6,000 suspected football hooligans. The EU's Schengen Information System, to which British law enforcement agencies will soon contribute, was originally planned to hold data on 800,000 people. Its first annual report, for 1997, disclosed that it already held over 3.5 million entries — with 7,000 people authorised to access the system.

Personal data is collected from a variety of sources. The latest annual report of the commissioner for phone tapping, Lord Nolan, showed that the Home Secretary signed warrants last year for 1,391 telephone taps, a year-on-

year increase of more than 25 per cent, mainly aimed at "serious crime" rather than at terrorists or spies. The figures for the first six months this year show a further increase. (The number of letter-opening warrants, by contrast, has halved over the past six years).

Nolan's report does not give details of taps authorised by the Northern Ireland Secretary, or the Foreign Secretary, who is responsible for MIS and GCHQ. But even the figures which are published are misleading — each warrant applies to all the telephones relating to a targeted individual or organisation.

The Interception of Communications Act (IOCA), whereby taps by law can only be applied after a cabinet minister has signed a warrant, is restricted to physical taps on land lines.

Mobile phones and e-mail are covered by separate rules, introduced without any parliamentary debate, including an agreement negotiated by the European Union, Norway, the US, Australia, and Canada, whereby service providers are obliged to give real-time access to e-mail — decoded if the communications are encrypted — and give the geographical location of mobile phones.

Though bugging and burglary warrants are regulated by statute (judicial ones for the police under the 1997 Police Act, home secretary warrants for MIS under the 1992 Security Service Act) the number is not disclosed. No law covers telephone metering — information passed to the police and other law enforcement agencies giving details of the names, addresses, and numbers of those dialled by a subscriber. Nor are there any

legal controls over the increasing deployment of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) systems, in both public places and private premises. "CCTV", says the Justice report, "is more than simply a tool for reducing crime; it also provides the ability to watch people in public places. It therefore raises the issue of privacy and, less directly, the right to freedom of assembly and movement. Many people do not like being watched, and although it is not possible to quantify the 'chilling effect' of CCTV, it undoubtedly exists so as possibly to restrict people in their lawful activities".

More sophisticated technology is being designed to compare "facial recognition" from a camera with images already held. Police, customs, and MIS also obtain information from informers, including juveniles, who benefit from financial or other rewards. Though no official figures exist, the Justice report refers to independent studies which suggest that in about 170 cases, over 700 informants and their immediate families were given new identities between 1978 and 1985, and sometimes given new homes in Australia or the US.

ALL these sources provide the material for the computerised comparison between different records and the wholesale exchange of personal data between the security and intelligence services, between Whitehall departments and between local authorities. The threat posed by data-matching was forcefully highlighted by

Big brother's embrace

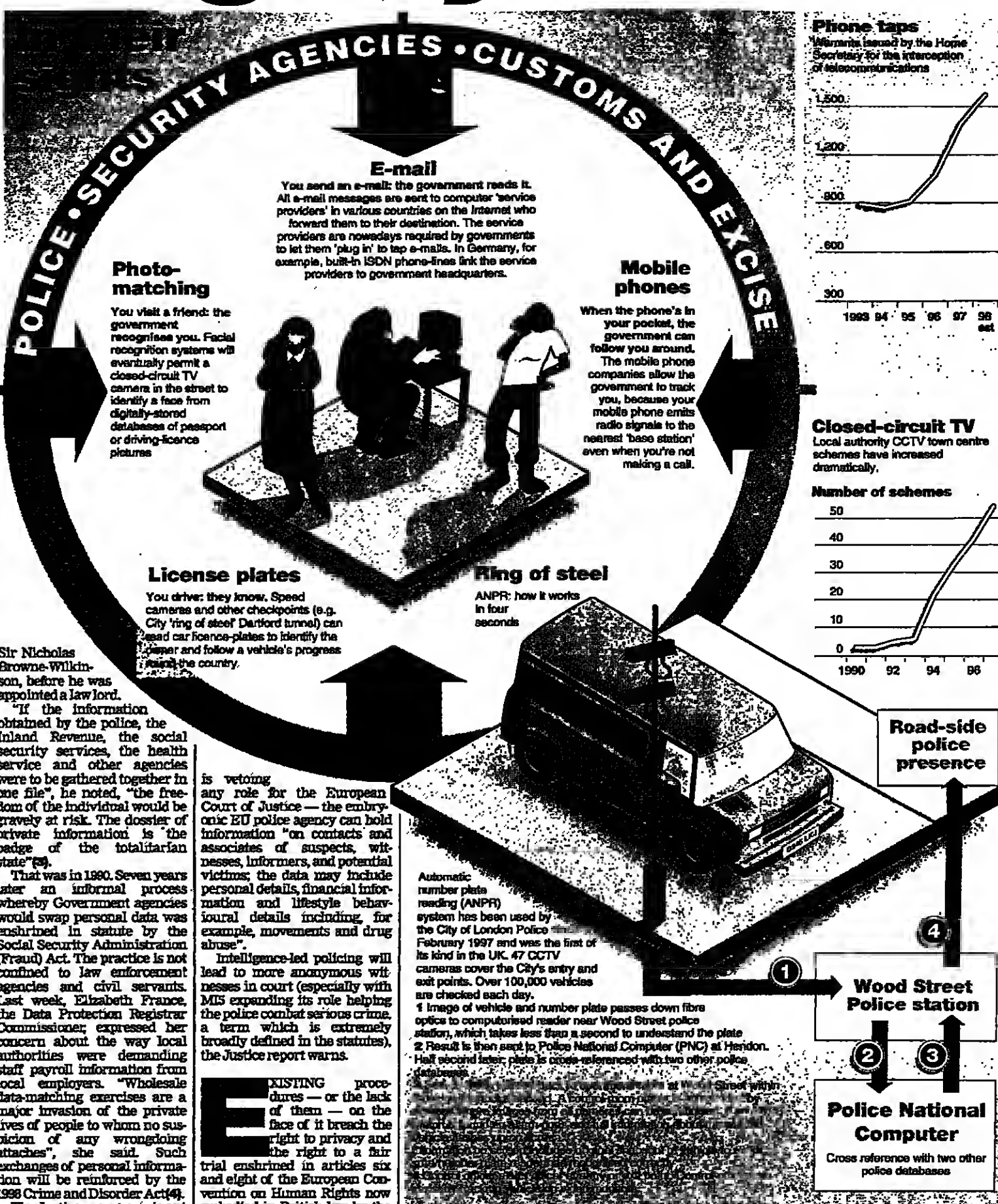
• Individuals have no way of checking whether the information held on them is accurate.
• The police are protected from all the main provisions of the Data Protection Act which is designed to ensure that information is collected fairly, is accurate, and used only for specified purposes.
• MIS is entirely exempt. The Home Office wants both the police and MIS to be excluded from the provisions of the promised Freedom of Information Act.

• The IOCA (telephone tapping) and Security Service tribunals, set up to consider complaints, have not upheld a single case. They meet in secret, without any oral hearings. As the Justice report points out, the IOCA tribunal cannot investigate an unlawful interception — one that has not been authorised by a warrant. There is no requirement for the tribunal to refer unlawful interceptions to the police.

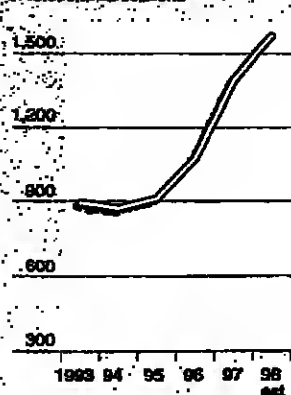
(A rebuke last week directed at Robin Cook, the foreign secretary, by Lord Justice Stuart-Smith, the commissioner responsible for monitoring MIS and GCHQ activities, for approving an "unlawful" warrant related only to a bureaucratic error — no unintended target was bugged).

• Recent judgments and statutes make it more difficult for defence lawyers to discover information gathered by the police and intelligence agencies.

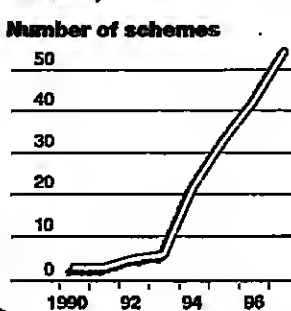
• The 1996 Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act allows the prosecution to withhold "sensitive" information under a limited "relevance test" without even the judge seeking it. This has the advantage of limiting the number of public interest immunity requests — gagging orders — which proved so embarrassing for the prosecution and the Government in the Matrix Churchill and other arms-to-Iraq trials.



Phone taps
Warrants issued by the Home Secretary for the interception of telecommunications



Closed-circuit TV
Local authority CCTV town centre schemes have increased dramatically.



is vetoing any role for the European Court of Justice — the embryonic EU police agency can hold information "on contacts and associates of suspects, witnesses, informers, and potential victims; the data may include personal details, financial information and lifestyle behaviour details including, for example, movements and drug abuse".

Intelligence-led policing will lead to more anonymous witnesses in court (especially with MIS expanding its role helping the police combat serious crime, a term which is extremely broadly defined in the statutes), the Justice report warns.

EXISTING procedures — or the lack of them — on the face of it breach the right to privacy and the right to a fair trial enshrined in articles six and eight of the European Convention on Human Rights now embodied in British law by the Human Rights Act. Recommendations proposed by Justice include bringing MIS under the same statutory powers as the police when it is acting in support of the police in combating serious crime; a statutory code of conduct covering the use of informers; stronger powers for the Data Protection Registrar; and new rules covering the disclosure of information obtained by covert intelligence-gathering.

Madeleine Colvin, director of legal policy at Justice and author of the report, insisted yesterday it was not simply a "knee-jerk" civil liberties

response. Covert policing was necessary. But at present it was "not properly accountable and potentially unlawful".

But the Justice report also highlights a curious trust of government in Britain about the potential threats posed by new technology. For this reason, the Cabinet Office has pressed ahead with no complaints to promote smart cards to enable people to obtain services, such as a car tax or benefit payment, more easily and more efficiently. It is the other side of the coin — not the State covertly compiling

personal data, but the individual voluntarily offering the data. The first steps, perhaps, to a universal identity card.

Sources: (1) Under Surveillance, covert policing and human rights standards, Justice, 59 Carter Lane, London EC4V 5AQ, £15; (2) Interception of Communications Act 1995, Report of the Commissioner for 1997, Stationery Office, £3.85; (3) Quoted in annual report of the Data Protection Registrar, 1998; (4) Press release of Data Protection Registrar, July 15 1998; (5)

Intelligence Services Act 1994, Report of the Commissioner for 1997, Stationery Office, £1.85. Graphic sources: Local Government Association; Police Review, May 2, 1997; City of London Police. Graphics: Freddy Allen. Research: Matthew Keating. Richard Norton-Taylor is the Guardian's security editor.

A summary of the recommendations of today's Justice report can be found on the Guardian's website at <http://reports.guardian.co.uk>

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Big money on the line

Telecoms merger mania sparked by BT tie-up

Simon Beavis, Julie Wolf in Brussels and Jonathan Watts in Tokyo

A NEW wave of mergers and takeovers in the telecommunications industry was in prospect last night as it emerged that two US phone groups — GTE and Bell Atlantic — are close to joining forces in a \$53 billion (£32 billion) venture.

News of the imminent tie-up began to leak out as nearly \$3 billion was added to the value of British Telecom when the markets got their first chance to assess its \$10 billion international alliance with AT&T.

Japan's largest international phone company said yesterday that it expects to join the alliance between BT and AT&T. Kokusai Den Shin Denwa Co (KDD) revealed it had already been approached by the two companies and



was giving positive consideration to joining. "It can safely be said that KDD will become a partner of the new alliance," said a spokesman for the Japanese firm, adding that executives from BT and AT&T would be visiting Tokyo to discuss details of a tie-up.

KDD controls 60 per cent of the 500 billion yen (£2.1 billion) Japanese international market and it could also offer the alliance a bridgehead into Asia, an area with enormous potential for growth.

The BT alliance and another mega-merger on the way in the US led to frantic speculation that the long-awaited consolidation of the telecoms industry had finally got into full swing.

GTE has been looking for a partner since its bid to buy MCI in league with BT last year was topped by WorldCom, Bell Atlantic — one of the original Baby Bell local phone operators — bought Nynex for \$25.6 billion last

year to emerge as the second-largest phone company in the US, after AT&T. Both companies refused to comment on a deal which could be clinched as early as next week.

There was also immediate talk of which other players might join the BT/AT&T alliance, set up to tap a market already worth \$40 billion and forecast to grow to \$200 billion in the early years of the next century.

The new alliance's immediate threat is to the WorldPartners partnership between KDD, AT&T and several other telecommunications carriers in the Asia-Pacific region and Europe. AT&T, which holds a 36 per cent share in WorldPartners, said it would withdraw from both WorldPartners and a similar European tie-up, Unisource, in 2000, putting the future of both projects in jeopardy.

As share traders reacted gleefully to news of Sunday's agreement between BT and AT&T to pool their resources and become the leading provider of services to multinational companies, shares in BT charged ahead, gaining as much as 11 per cent in early trading to rise to an all-time high of 320p before settling back to end the day 43p up at 313.5p, valuing BT at \$55.5 billion.

AT&T shares fared less well. By the time London closed they were off 0.2 per cent in New York.

Analysts saw the tie-up as particularly good news for BT, which has invested fewer assets and a smaller customer base in the venture than AT&T, but still come up with a 50/50 joint venture.

The AT&T-BT alliance will face heavy scrutiny from the European Commission, which is expected to focus on the strength of the two carriers in transatlantic phone communications.

A commission spokesman said yesterday that, although the two companies have yet to submit formally their plans to the commission, BT chief Sir Peter Bonfield has kept competition commissioner Karel Van Miert informed about the deal over the past few weeks.

The spokesman declined to comment, however, on the regulatory outlook for the tie-up, which the companies believe could take a year to clear through review bodies in Britain, Brussels and the US. The commission said only that the deal would be judged on the same terms as previous link-ups between phone companies. Although it has placed conditions on many of these alliances, none has been blocked.

Notebook

What a difference a deal makes



Edited by Mark Milner

electricity market starts properly and on time; whether to refer Powergen's agreed £1.9 billion takeover of East Midlands electricity or Enron's £1.3 billion bid for Western Water, and thereby shape the energy market as it moves towards vertical integration and multi-utilities.

These are tough, legalistic decisions far from the world of spin. Even tougher — remembering that photo-session at Kellingley Colliery — is whether to forget the energy review and sink the coal industry, and/or sell off a large chunk of the Post Office.

Then there's the little matter of the competitive white paper, with its goal of raising UK innovation and productivity, and the reform of company law. Toughest of all: enshrine the Fairness at Work proposals on extending union rights in law.

The unions await the avowedly pro-business Mr Mandelson with trepidation. Executive Britain expects a more receptive response than it got from Margaret Beckett. But what they all want is a coherent industrial policy, not pyrotechnics. By eschewing the presidential title, the new incumbent has sent a signal he means to get on with the job. It's the toughest one he's had.

Closing the gap

THE six-week delay between monetary policy committee meetings and the publication of the minutes is an unnecessary piece of obfuscation. By the time one set of minutes is available, another meeting has already taken place. Even if policy itself has not changed, the balance of debate within the committee may well have done.

It is not just a question of the City's wheeler-dealers being left guessing. Uncertainty is the stuff of financial markets — look no further than today's derivatives markets, or their forebears in soft commodity sectors like pork bellies, orange juice or coffee.

A fair few people in the City will find trading opportunities on the back of the speculation, however well- or ill-informed inherent in the long delay in the release of the MPC minutes.

The real worry, as far as financial markets are concerned, is that the longer the gap between meeting and published minutes, the greater the chance of information leaking out.

But there is a wider question of public interest. The level of interest rates is a key component of economic policy. Along with higher taxes it bears directly on almost all of us, yet the MPC is not elected, most of its members are unknown outside academic or central banking circles.

We are told quickly enough when we are going to have to pay more for our mortgages or our bank overdrafts yet the why — crucial in giving any sense to democratic legitimacy to the setting of interest rates — is produced only after a delay during which events may have overtaken explanation. The MPC is moving to shorten the gap between meeting and minutes. It should do so without delay.

EC opens inquiry into cost of calls to mobiles

Julie Wolf in Brussels

THE European Commission yesterday began an in-depth investigation into the cost of phone calls between landline and mobile phones after a preliminary inquiry found that such charges appear to be excessive.

Although BT was among 14 cases identified by the commission for further study, Brussels is putting its inquiry into the UK company on hold pending the outcome of an investigation by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

"The purpose of this investigation is to find out whether prices are indeed excessive," a commission spokesman said. The commission has the power to fine companies up to 10 per cent of turnover for abusing their dominant market position, although it has never applied the maximum penalty.

The commission in February began looking at the cost of making and receiving mobile phone calls after finding that it can cost consumers up to six times as much to call a mobile as a landline phone.

EU officials said in-depth inquiries will focus on instances where charges are more than double an EU "benchmark" price, based on the industry's costs and profit margins.

Forget the spin

FROM the Dome to the Pool. That's the journey Peter Mandelson must make as he takes over from Margaret Beckett at the Department of Trade and Industry.

From the headline-grabbing, easily spun issue of how to celebrate the millennium to the low-key complexities of reforming the workings of the wholesale electricity market. And that's just one of the jobs waiting for him in Victoria Street.

Yesterday saw the latest stage of the utilities review: in Mr Mandelson's in-tray will be decisions on the scope of further legislation and a round of lobbying letters from producers and consumers.

Coming up soon: ensuring liberalisation of the domestic

EC opens inquiry into cost of calls to mobiles

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Receiving you loud and clear... one youngster in Albert Dock, Liverpool, found his mobile phone rather useful. He wasn't paying the bill though.

British scientist provided route to global reach

Charlotte Denny on breakthrough that made cheap communication possible

THE weekend alliance between telecoms groups BT and AT&T owes something to a British scientist whose name will be unfamiliar to most telephone users.

Donald Davies was an important figure in developing the technology for computer networking which underlies

the Internet. BT and AT&T's announcement included plans to develop a global network using the technology which will allow not just telephone calls but faxes, e-mail and other data to be sent at a fraction of the cost of long-distance telephone calls.

In the 1960s, Mr Davies, who was working for the

National Physical Laboratory, designed a system for sending data between computers by breaking it up into lots of short messages or packets which would find their own way to their destination along different routes, rather than go down a dedicated line. The computer at the other end reassembles them.

The key to ensuring these digital packets find their way safely was giving each computer on a network a univer-

sally recognised address. Each data package, like a letter, carries its destination address.

Mr Davies's thinking influenced scientists at the US Department of Defense's Advanced Research Projects Agency whose work eventually led to the development of the Internet.

Sunday's announcement by BT and its American partner marks an admission by telephone companies that Internet technology is a better way

of transferring information, including conversations, than direct telephone links. The companies argue that their global network will have none of the drawbacks which are plaguing the Net.

The Internet is a public service whose links are owned and maintained by a patchwork of different providers ranging from academic institutions to public agencies. The problem is that some of its main pipelines for transferring data are becoming

hopelessly overcrowded, leading users to experience frustrating delays or lost information.

Instead, BT and AT&T's global network of fibre-optic cables and satellites — targeted at business users — will link companies in 100 cities and rival the reach of the Internet. The companies promise customers will experience "guaranteed quality service", rather than the erratic service offered by the Internet.

Prospectors aim to net billions in virtual gold rush

Mark Tran in Washington

THE Internet is a turn-on for investors. Witness BT's surging share price yesterday. To the aficionado, however, BT is perhaps too long in the tooth and makes too much money to be a real stock market play.

Take EarthLink Network, an Internet access company which went public in Janu-

ary last year with an offer price of \$6.50 (£4) and now trades at more than \$41. Last year the company lost \$12 million, yet it has a market value of \$920 million. Its founder and chairman, Sky Dayton, aged 36, is worth almost \$120 million.

Internet stocks are trading at mind-boggling levels, yet many have still to make any money. The craze for Internet companies is akin to the California gold rush,

as investors prospect for online fortunes.

It took Microsoft about four years for its stock to increase in value tenfold. Intel did it in eight years. In little more than two years, the share price of Yahoo!, a "portal" or megawebsite, has multiplied 17-fold. In just over a year, Amazon.com, the online bookseller, has seen its stock increase tenfold. Several young online million-

aires have emerged, such as Jerry Yang, the founder of Yahoo!, worth \$905 million, and Jeffrey Bezos, founder and chief executive of Amazon.com, worth \$2 billion.

By 2002 there will be 62 million households on-line and consumer commerce on the Internet will reach \$22.5 billion a year, according to Forrester Research in Cambridge, Massachusetts. However, the astonishing

share price for such companies as Amazon.com still means that Internet stocks are selling more on hope and hype than on real numbers. Even enthusiastic analysts are left scratching their heads to come up with valuation models for companies that have no earnings and where book value is meaningless because fixed assets are scant. More fundamentally, the high price of Internet

stocks reflects supply and demand. Although the Net is creating business opportunities, there are few pure Internet companies to choose from. Morgan Stanley tracks 85 Internet companies that want public after Netscape. They have a total market value of \$56 billion — a drop in the ocean of the \$12,800 billion US equity market. Mind you, BT could tip the balance of power.

Brazilian sell-off the next target

Alex Bellos in Rio de Janeiro

BT will be hoping to expand its global interests tomorrow when it takes part in the \$7.5 billion sell-off of Brazilian telecommunications group Telebras, the world's largest privatisation this year and the largest ever in Latin America.

BT is believed to be preparing bids for three of the 12 holdings, the mobile phone franchises in the three most lucrative regions that include Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo and the southern city of Curitiba.

"Investors will be negotiating up to the last minute," said Jose Pio Borges, vice president of the National Development Bank has been charged with overseeing the sale.

Spain's Telefonica and Italia Telecom, who have already invested in Latin America, are understood to be the main contenders in the auction which will take place in the Rio de Janeiro bourse in one session.

Canada's Telesystem International Wireless said it would be going for the mobile phone holdings. "We see Brazil as the most exciting and most promising cellular market in the world," said a spokesman.

With a population of 160 million, Brazil has just 11.5 phones for every 100 people against 25 in countries like Costa Rica or 66 in Sweden. The sell-off is the flagship reform of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso's electoral term and the new owners will be expected to double the number of phone lines in two years.

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Canada 2.41	India 70.54	New Zealand 3.14	Sweden 12.71
Cyprus 0.8393	Ireland 1.1311	Norway 12.16	Switzerland 2.49
Denmark 10.52	Israel 5.078	Portugal 290.63	Turkey 450.780
Finland 8.789	Italy 2.557	Saudi Arabia 6.11	USA 1.8115
France 9.57			

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Drugs in Sport

Duncan Mackay and John Duncan on the latest scandal to hit athletics as two Olympic medallists fail drug tests

Positive blow to Samaranch line

RANDY Barnes, the Olympic shot put champion, was last night facing a life ban after failing his second drug test, the day after the International Olympic Committee president called for a softening of the rules on doping.

Dennis Mitchell, third in the 100 metres behind Linford Christie at the 1992 Games in Barcelona, was also alleged to have failed a drugs test and is set to receive a two-year suspension.

Juan Antonio Samaranch said in an interview with the Spanish newspaper El Mundo on Sunday that drugs should

only be banned if they represented a health risk and not because they were performance-enhancing.

"Drug taking is anything which directly damages the health of the sportsman and, secondly, artificially improves his performance. If something produces just the second effect, then for me it's not drug-taking. If it produces the first, then yes," the paper reported.

His comments came in the wake of the doping scandal that has rocked the Tour de France. But he will be embarrassed by this latest scandal to hit track and field.

Barnes and Mitchell are

both alleged to have tested positive after out-of-competition tests on April 1. Although only the A sample has been tested, the International Amateur Athletic Federation imposed a suspension.

Barnes could be banned for life for his second offence. He was suspended for two years in 1990 for the listed substance methyltestosterone at a meeting in Malmo. This time, the substance is androstenedione, an outlawed nutritional supplement. Mitchell tested positive for testosterone. He was suspended last week, after finishing fifth in the Goodwill Games 100m and

ran the second leg for the winning US 4x100m relay team in New York.

Following Samaranch's comments, Britain's chief drugs tester, Michele Verroken, called for Government action to head off any softening of anti-drugs policy in sport.

Verroken, head of the United Kingdom Sports Council anti-doping unit, said that if the remarks were reported accurately and if international sports bodies were prepared to accept the use of drugs to improve performance, then governments should take action.

"There is now a case for Government to step in," said

Verroken. "So far they haven't legislated but it is one way of dealing with the problem. If we are going to have inaction, vagueness or weakness, if some sports bodies can't be bothered to tackle drug-taking then the Government can. They did it for the Taylor Report when football was dragging its feet over spectator safety."

The IOC yesterday announced a conference to review the battle against doping, to be held in Lausanne in January, at which Samaranch's ideas will be discussed. The IOC says Samaranch expected it to produce "a clear definition of doping".

The British Olympic Association was yesterday seeking clarification of Samaranch's remarks from the IOC. "If these reports are accurate," said Craig Riddle, the chairman of the BOA, "then it is a major change in IOC policy and I am not aware of it having been discussed anywhere. As far as we are concerned performance-enhancing drugs have no place in sport whatever they are harmful or not. Imagine what the chemical industry are thinking this morning."

Other key IOC figures are already lining up against the president. Jacques Rogge, an IOC executive committee member and vice-president of



Samaranch... surprise call to take a softer line on doping

of the IOC medical commission, said he was surprised to hear of Samaranch's reported remarks.

Rogge, a Belgian surgeon, said it was impossible to differentiate between drugs which are hazardous or not, citing the example of EPO, one of the drugs at the centre

of the current Tour de France scandal.

"EPO, for example, is not dangerous in very small doses in therapeutic conditions for patients," he said. "But it is probably because the cause of many problems because athletes take it in too high doses."

Football

Villa reject Yorke bid from United

ASTON VILLA last night rejected an initial bid from Manchester United for their £16 million-rated striker Dwight Yorke, dismissing the Old Trafford offer for the Trinidad and Tobago international as "completely inappropriate".

Villa are refusing to disclose details of United's package which was aimed at trying to tempt them to offload the player who was bought for only £120,000 in December 1988.

But Villa's manager John Gregory, who has offered Yorke a new lucrative five-year contract believed to be worth £30,000 a week, dismissed reports that he had agreed to take the Norway striker Ole Gunnar Solskjær in part exchange.

"The offer for Yorke is completely inappropriate bearing in mind that we don't want to sell him anyway," said Gregory. "We have agreed no deal with Manchester United regarding Dwight Yorke and to suggest we have agreed something regarding Solskjær is absolute rubbish."

Gregory stressed he is under no pressure from Villa's board of directors to make a financial killing by selling Yorke, who has two years left of his current contract but whose value will inevitably decrease as time passes because of the Bosman ruling. Villa have already lost the £5 million-rated defender Steve Staunton to Liverpool on a free transfer during the close season.

"If Manchester United offer £25 million for Yorke I am at liberty to turn it down if I want," said Gregory. "The board have not interfered in any decision I have made since I came to the club, and they have told me what I decide regarding Yorke will be final."

Villa now wait to see if United's manager Alex Ferguson returns with a more satisfactory offer for the player who has been his main target this summer. But, perhaps significantly, Yorke yesterday lined up with the rest of the Villa playing staff at the annual photo-call.

It remains to be seen whether his appearance in

tonight's friendly at Gregory's former club Wycombe Wanderers will be his Villa swansong. Yorke continues to stall over putting pen to paper on a new Villa contract as long as United maintain an interest in his services.

"Villa have offered me an excellent new contract. However I have agreed nothing at this stage," he said. "I want to see what happens with the Manchester United situation before making any decision."

However Gregory is optimistic that the club's contract rebels Mark Bosnich, Mark Draper and Gary Charles will sign new long-term deals by the end of the week.

Meanwhile, United's £4.5 million Sweden winger Jesper Blomqvist revealed yesterday that he did not want to leave Parma, claiming that the Italian club had pressured him into moving to Old Trafford against his will.

"I didn't want to go to Manchester, because I liked it at Parma," he said. "But Parma's coach decided he could fit me into his new system."

Goldberg adopts Australian accent

CRYSTAL PALACE's chairman Mark Goldberg cast his net further afield yesterday by buying a 70 per cent share in Northern Spirit, a new Australian team.

Goldberg will give an additional £750,000 to the Sydney-based club, whose coaches will visit London to study the tactics and training methods of Palace's manager Terry Venables, the former Australia coach.

Venables has made a £1 million offer for Portsmouth's Australia striker John Aloisi. Venables signed the 24-year-old from the Italian side Cremonese for £300,000 last summer when he was chairman at Fratton Park.

The Nottingham Forest striker Kevin Campbell is set to join the Turkish club Trabzonspor for £3 million after flying out for talks. The 28-year-old agreed a long-term contract with Forest this month but has not signed it because the club delayed drawing up the paper work.

Scot Gemmill is also likely to leave the First Division champions after refusing to sign a new contract. The Scotland midfielder has been put on the transfer list, omitted from the pre-season tour to Finland and told by Forest's manager Dave Bassett he will not be considered for the first team.

Newcastle's manager Kenny Dalglish is expected to take his summer spending over £14 million by signing the 25-year-old Croatia defender within the next 24 hours if they can agree a fee with Real Betis.

Oliver Dacourt, 23, has completed his £4 million transfer from Strasbourg to Everton on a four-year contract. He is expected to be joined today by a second midfielder, Monaco's John Dier, who had a medical at Goodison Park yesterday for his £2.5 million move.

Sheffield United's defender Michel Vonk has returned home to sign for the Dutch club MVV Maastricht for £100,000. The 29-year-old suffered a serious knee injury last season.

Robson home thoughts after going Dutch

BOBBI ROBSON plans to return to England to end his career after taking up a one-year contract as a temporary replacement for Rangers' new coach Dick Advocaat at PSV Eindhoven in Holland.

"PSV have been very clear and honest with me," said the former England and Barcelona manager. "They had lined up Eric Gerets as coach but he was not available for a year. I agreed to help out after that I'd like to go back to England for good. I've spent a lot of time away from home."

Roger Lemerre was yesterday officially appointed France's coach, replacing Aimé Jacquet. The Frenchman reminded their World Cup victory. Lemerre, 37, Jacquet's deputy since January, has signed a two-year contract.

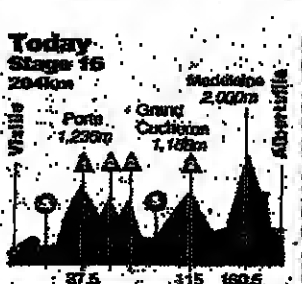
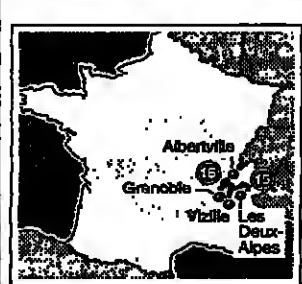
Nwankwo Kanu and Taribo West, members of Nigeria's World Cup team, face fines after failing to return on time for pre-season training with Internazionale.

Diego Maradona, 37, could join the Spanish Second Division club Badajoz, who are president is the Argentinian comedian Mauricio Tinsell.

Tour de France



Climb of his life... Marco Pantani heads for the yellow jersey on the Gallitort-Pascal Pwani



The Pirate claims the high screes

Pantani attack leaves Ullrich out in the cold reports William Fotheringham

THIS Tour was criticised for being too easy, but it is now in the pocket of the pint-sized climber Marco Pantani, who is set to become the first Italian to win the race for 33 years after his full-frontal assault in the Alps on Jan Ullrich left the German in a state of shock nine minutes before the start of the Tour de France.

Pantani won the Tour of Italy back in June, and is on the verge of becoming the first man to win both Giro and Tour in the same year since Miguel Indurain in 1993. Yesterday was his sixth mountain-stage win in three Tours, and far away the most significant. Rarely has the Tour been turned around in one day by one man in such decisive style.

Pantani put in a characteristic lone attack on the highest ascent of the race, the 8,500ft Col du Galibier, tackled in bone-chilling rain and thick mist. Ullrich, who had worn the yellow jersey since the race entered the Pyrenees six days ago, was unable to hold the pace set by the little scotors with the goatee beard and golden earrings.

By the screw-sloped moon-scape at the summit of the Alpine giant, he was already halfway to relieving Ullrich of his yellow jersey. For a man known as The Pirate, he showed atypical caution in stopping just over the top to pull on a plastic raincoat to offer some protection against the biting cold.

This was a wise move probably prompted by a minor spill earlier in the stage. The other front runners opted to don their raincoats on the move leaving no hands free for the brakes while career-ing downhill at 50mph on the sodden roads.

The American Bobby Ullrich, who rode bravely to conserve his second place yesterday, ended up having a close encounter with a camper van when he ran out of road while engaged in just such a manoeuvre.

Ullrich was unlucky to puncture at the foot of the descent leading to the final five-

mile pull up to this ski resort, a Tour stage finish for the first time, but by this point he was already five minutes behind, the overnight three-minute advantage which he had enjoyed over the Italian a distant memory.

His day was summed up in a single gesture. At the foot of the ascent he took off the long-sleeved yellow jersey he had worn to keep warm while coming down from the Galibier and threw it on to the road, not even bothering to hand it in to his team car. It was the act of an utterly defeated man.

Relative also-rans simply pulled past him as the gradient stiffened, and in the end he was left only with his team-mates Udo Boltz and Bjarne Riis, who were almost reduced to pushing him to the line. At the finish he was 25th in the sodden, shivering, slow-motion procession across the line, with the hunched look and puffy eyes of a man who had lived through a nightmare.

There were other notable casualties. Laurent Jalabert, who was third overall yesterday morning, and still harboured hopes of a place in the first three in Paris, is probably reflecting on the fact that he is not a man of the Tour. He lost more than 15 minutes and has dropped to 22nd overall.

Pantani now has a lead of almost four minutes on Jalabert, with the Italian climber Fernando Escartin in third some 20sec further back.

Today, as the race crosses the Chartreuse Massif, and scales the 6,000ft Col de la Madeleine before plummeting downhill to finish in Albertville, the race remains in Pantani's favourite terrain, and few would bet against him gaining yet more time.

● The Dutch TVM team, under threat of expulsion from the Tour over a drugs seizure, are now likely to stay in the race. Yesterday the team manager Cees Priem and doctor Andrei Mikhailov travelled under police escort from Paris to Reims where they were questioned by an investigating magistrate who said that she considered the five TVM riders left in the race were not at fault in the affair.

Ullrich was unlucky to puncture at the foot of the descent leading to the final five-

Team talk

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Luge

Sled Dog

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Results

Football

Golf

Tennis

Baseball

Cricket

Cycling

Horse Racing

Boxing

Swimming

Figure Skating

Ice Hockey

Biathlon

Luge

Sled Dog

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

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Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Results

Football

Golf

Tennis

Baseball

Cricket

Cycling

Horse Racing

Boxing

Swimming

Figure Skating

Ice Hockey

Biathlon

Luge

Sled Dog

Winter Paralympics

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Winter Paralympics

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Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Results

Football

Golf

Tennis

Baseball

Cricket

Cycling

Horse Racing

Boxing

Swimming

Figure Skating

Ice Hockey

Biathlon

Luge

Sled Dog

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Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

Results

Football

Golf

Tennis

Baseball

Cricket

Cycling

Horse Racing

Boxing

Swimming

Figure Skating

Ice Hockey

Biathlon

Luge

Sled Dog

Winter Paralympics

Winter Paralympics

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